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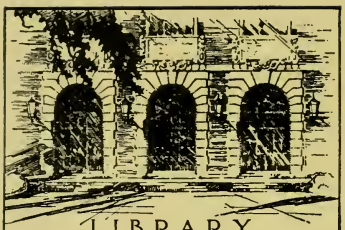

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THE ADVENTURES

OF

A KING'S PAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ALMACK'S REVISITED."

"If you would know whether Virtues or Vices keep a man farthest from a Court, go to Court and learn."—WINTER'S TALE.

"Les bonnes copies sont celles qui nous font voir le ridicule des méchants originaux."—ROCHEFOUCAULD.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1829.

THE ADVENTURES

OF

A KING'S PAGE

CHAPTER I

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THE ADVENTURES

OF

A KING'S PAGE.

CHAPTER I.

AMONGST the numerous foreign families, who were obliged to withdraw from the French metropolis at the early part of the Revolution, was that of General Beverley, an English officer of large fortune and noble connections. The stay of this gentleman in Paris had been protracted beyond that period which was perhaps consistent, in those fearful times, with the safety of his wife and child; but Lady Theodosia Beverley, a woman of strong mind,

and great personal courage, had hitherto expressed no alarm, and their only son, the idol of his parents, evinced the utmost disinclination to quit Paris, turning into ridicule all idea of danger. Thus, the frightful scenes of the day of Versailles had already taken place, ere the Beverleys considered it advisable to commence preparations for their departure; nor was it, in fact, until the thunder of the insurrectionary cannon directed against the Palace of the unhappy Louis, and the cries of the ferocious multitude, as they pursued the faithful *Suisses* across the gardens of the Tuilleries, had re-echoed in their ears, that the General determined to demand his passports, and to bid adieu to his Parisian friends.

Although the principal incidents of the following Tale are intimately connected with an occurrence of that dreadful period, it would be superfluous to dwell upon a subject which has been so lately rendered familiar to my readers, by the faithful and highly wrought history of Sir Walter Scott; and I shall pass therefore without farther preface to my story.

Arthur Beverley, whom I have mentioned as the only son of General Beverley, was a young man of peculiar character, and most delicate constitution; so much so, that his parents on quitting Paris had been recommended to try the effects of a warm climate, instead of returning to their native land; and as great fears were entertained lest his debility should terminate in consumption, it was consequently resolved that they should proceed direct from Paris into Italy. The General was the younger brother of a nobleman, and immediate heir to the title and revenues of a splendid property in one of our maritime counties. In addition to these prospects, he had already inherited a large fortune in right of his mother, which united property was strictly entailed on himself and his heirs male; in default of which, the ancient Earldom of Roxmere, together with the estates, would revert to a distant branch of the family, whose immediate claim to the title had been set aside by the decision of the House of Peers, during the life of the present nobleman's father. General

Beverley's maternal property would also, under similar default of issue, return to the relations of his mother, leaving him, in short, merely a life-interest in the whole.

It may be imagined under these circumstances, (independent of all natural ties) that the health of an only son, upon whose existence so much depended, was a source of unceasing solicitude and anxiety to his parents.

The incessant cares of the General and Lady Thedosia had therefore been constantly directed towards the improvement of a child, in whom were centered not alone their affections and tenderness, but their hopes for the preservation of the family title and estates. Gifted by nature with precocious and extraordinary talents, Arthur Beverley bade fair, as far as genius and cultivation extended, to realize the fondest expectations of his parents, and to become a brilliant ornament to that elevated station in life, in which he seemed destined to move. It was not, however, without the utmost alarm and anxiety, that his parents remarked that his intellectual accomplishments threatened

far to outstrip his physical powers. The plant grew with grace, luxuriance, and rapidity; but the early abundance of its blossoms tended to deprive its stem of the sap necessary to its perfect strength and maturity; and it was therefore endeavoured to check rather than encourage that strong propensity to study and sedentary occupations, which marked his character from earliest childhood. Fearing, with mistaken tenderness, that Arthur's constitution and delicate frame were unequal to support the rough exercises and fatigues of a public school, or to undergo the ordeal of that most useful drudgery to which boys of all ranks must at first submit at these establishments, the parents resolved that his education should be conducted at home, under the guidance of a private tutor.

How often, alas! are the most prudent, and admirable intentions defeated by the very means employed to produce success; and such was the case with young Beverley. Possessing a passionate fondness for poetry and the arts, being naturally of an enthusiastic disposition,

and exalted temperament; his character imbibed a romantic turn, which was increased by the secluded life he led, and fostered by the cultivation of painting, music, and fictitious literature. In proportion as he advanced towards manhood, his attachment to these fascinating pursuits, his love of seclusion, as well as the romantic turn of his mind, became more strongly confirmed, and it was with pain his parents observed that he evinced a dislike to every manly amusement suited to his age, or conducive to his health.

Having seen little of other young men of his own age, and feeling no inclination for society, he passed his whole time either in study, or in occupying his thoughts with the most romantic and exaggerated speculations, to which his pencil gave imaginary life, and his piano-forte momentary animation. His whole soul at length became bent upon the possession of some ideal beauty, the visionary creation of his heated imagination, which his exalted fancy pourtrayed in the brightest colours, and of which his canvass repeated the glowing image. There was, how-

ever, no substance, no solidity in these creations, and as they successively vanished from his mind, they left a craving after reality, a void in his heart, which gave a deeper turn of melancholy to his character, and contributed to undermine his constitution. This was not lost upon the General, who too late discovered the erroneous system he had pursued, and would gladly have seen his son possess less cultivation and more vigour, less intellectual superiority and more of the buoyancy and wildness of youth. Above all, he lamented that tendency to mystery and concealment, that morbid retirement within himself, and want of confidence in his communication with others, which had lately grown upon him to an alarming degree.

The Beverleys' visit to Paris had been undertaken principally with the view of giving a new turn to their son's thoughts; they hoped, by plunging him at once into all the novelties and pleasures of the French capital, that his mind might be gradually withdrawn from its visionary and romantic tendencies;—that he would become more sociable and communica-

tive; and they rejoiced in a short time to discover that their plan appeared to succeed, as an evident amendment both in his health and spirits took place ere they had inhabited Paris many weeks.

There were several French families on intimate terms with the Beverleys, but none more so than that of the Marquis d'Avrancourt, a nobleman of ancient descent, and no less splendid fortune, holding a post of honour near the person of his ill-fated sovereign. The Marquis was a widower, having lost his wife shortly after their marriage, who left him an only daughter, to whom the old nobleman was devotedly attached. She was a young and beautiful creature, possessing all those graces of mind and person, which render an accomplished and virtuous French woman one of the most fascinating beings in the world. Loving his daughter with too much tenderness to allow her to be separated from him for the purpose of instruction, the Marquis had broken through the general system of convent education, and retained her constantly at home, where she was reared

under the charge of an aunt, and perfected in every species of accomplishment. Such indeed was Monsieur d'Avrancourt's fondness for his child, that she was permitted a thousand indulgences, and a much greater share of liberty than was at all usual with other girls of her rank or station in life, or indeed, than was enjoyed by any but married women.

It may be supposed that a person of Mademoiselle d'Avrancourt's great beauty and large prospects, did not long remain without numerous suitors; but her heart had not hitherto spoken in favour of any one, and she therefore listened without repugnance to the proposition of the individual upon whom her father had fixed his choice. Her destined husband was the son of a nobleman of equal rank and fortune with herself, and to him it was settled she should be united, as soon as he returned from the diplomatic mission to which he was attached.

The intercourse between the D'Avrancourts and Beverleys was of the most cordial nature, and the old nobleman was delighted to perceive

that his daughter had formed a strong attachment for Lady Theodosia, in whose society she passed the greater portion of her time, and this, of course, led to a great intimacy between the young people. To look on Julie without being struck by her rare beauty was impossible: to live much in her society, and to prevent these first impressions from ripening into a still more tender sentiment, required more than common indifference and insensibility to all that was lovely and perfect in nature.

Arthur Beverley possessed too few of those cool and useful preservatives, so necessary to the resistance of such temptations, to enable him to escape the fascination. He saw her, and he thought, not only that his own imagination had never pictured any thing so beautiful, but that the glowing descriptions of Tasso and Ariosto, or the romantic enthusiasm of Petrarch, were still too cold if applied to this lovely creature. As he became better acquainted, and enjoyed more of her society, he drank still deeper of the intoxicating poison

for which he had so long thirsted. She appeared more fair than the brilliant creation of his own dreams, more lovely than the *beau idéal*, which his own heated fancy had so often conjured up, and of which his masterly pencil had so frequently traced the resemblance. He became passionately, madly in love. For awhile he doubted of a return; his suspense was agony; at length his fears diminished, for he found he was not indifferent to her. Assuming greater courage, he declared his passion—his avowal was well received. Their sentiments were mutual. He had never loved before, save the visions of his own creation, and fiction had now given way to reality. His health improved, his spirits ameliorated, and gaiety took the place of melancholy. He laughed, talked and danced; he became, in many respects, a different being. A new light burst upon his mind, gilding his existence with the most radiant colours; he seemed to be regenerated, to have imbibed new force from the fountain of life, and he quaffed with heedless joy from the delicious source.

The attachment of the young people had existed for some months previous to the General's departure from Paris, without exciting the suspicions of their respective parents; for the Marquis considered his daughter as already married, though the contract was not actually signed, and this intended union was looked upon by all "the world" as definitively arranged. Fond as he was of his child, D'Avrancourt had little time latterly to pay close attention to her looks or manner; he was satisfied at her being constantly with Lady Theodosia, and the idea of her forming an attachment for any other than the husband to whom she was affianced never entered his head. On the other hand, though Lady Theodosia was aware that her son admired the fair Julie, yet she had no conception of the real nature of his sentiments, and she looked upon his attentions, (which in society were not particularly marked,) as the natural homage of a young man to a beautiful girl. In her presence the lovers were extremely guarded, and this may, in some measure, account for Lady Theodosia's blindness,

which was the more extraordinary in a woman of her tact and knowledge of the world: but the wisest, the most prudent persons are not always the most clear-sighted in matters of this nature; and, in fact, she was too much overjoyed at witnessing the rapid amendment in her son's health and spirits, to pause in order to analyze the cause.

Great as were the hopes of Julie and Arthur that every impediment to their union would be eventually overcome, yet, strange to say, they still feared, lest their sentiments should be betrayed; and as there was moreover something in this concealment which accorded with the heated and romantic temperament of young Beverley, it was determined that they should preserve a strict guard over their looks and conduct in the presence of others, and endeavour, if possible, to discover some method of meeting alone, when they might freely give way to the utmost effusions of the passion which held dominion over them.

The situation of their respective abodes presented the most unfortunate, but to them the

happiest facility for this clandestine purpose. The Hôtel d'Avrancourt, in the Rue de Grenelle, St. Germain, was immediately contiguous to that occupied by the Beverleys, the gardens of which were merely separated by a low iron pallisade. This obstacle presented a feeble barrier to the ardour of the lovers; and thus they had incessant opportunities of enjoying each other's society without the presence of a third person.

They were both young, ardent, enthusiastic, and revelling in a delirium of love: they met almost nightly; to them the hours of separation were martyrdom: day was to them a period of restraint and darkness; night was their day, for then they lived in the light of each other's love unshackled and unrestrained. Dangerous and fatal privilege! A hundred times they separated with the resolution of openly declaring their sentiments to their respective parents, but from day to day these good intentions were postponed. When Julia attempted to make known her secret to the Marquis, her tongue cleaved to her mouth, her courage

failed; she dreaded his anger, and still more she feared the destruction of that dream of bliss which now formed the only charm of her existence. In short, up to the last moment of that hour which was destined to separate them, they had remained silent, and they parted under the effects of the same fatal and inexplicable concealment.

From the moment the Beverleys quitted Paris, Arthur relapsed into his former state of morbid melancholy, and his health decreased in a still more rapid proportion than it had previously amended. His spirits were reduced to the most pitiable state of depression; he became pensive, absent, and indifferent to all that was passing around him. The enthusiasm of his disposition yielded to the most listless apathy; the beauties of Nature, which formerly possessed so many charms for his imagination, were now passed unheeded, or if they did attract his attention, the sensations they awakened were those of pain, rather than enjoyment. The divine productions of the artists and poets of the classic land he was about to visit, had

no longer any attraction for him: novelty had lost all its invigorating powers over his soul, since he was no longer near her who made every moment of his life appear a new existence, and embellished every succeeding hour with some new fascination. Still he remained silent, and obstinately resisted every effort of his unhappy parents to ascertain the cause of his grief.

Ere they had been many weeks at Venice, the first place where they sojourned any length of time, Arthur's languor of body and depression of mind increased in the most alarming degree: not only had he sunk into a state of complete listless indifference, but he would shut himself up for hours, shunning the society and conversation even of his parents. Fears were entertained that his mind was affected; and yet his discourse and conduct in every other respect was perfectly rational.

Although he had resisted every attempt of Lady Theodosia to draw from him a confession of his feelings, yet she felt convinced at length that he must be a prey to a hopeless and fatal

passion for Julie d'Avrancourt, and too late regretted her own imprudence in not having persuaded her husband to remove at an earlier period from Paris. Being, however, fully aware of the engagement which bound Julie to her destined husband, and being still ignorant that the sentiments of the young people were mutual, she pitied her son with all the tender indulgence of a parent and a woman, but could not discover any remedy for the evil.

Continued change of scene, and novelty of every description, had in most similar cases been considered a more efficacious remedy than the sagest counsel, or most prudent arguments; and it was determined to rely on these for a cure. In the mean time, the General's kindness and indulgence to his son were redoubled; every thing that tenderness and affection could suggest, or wealth procure, was employed to divert him. The parents were confirmed in this line of conduct by the continued silence of Arthur; for with the utmost degree of unnatural perverseness and obstinacy, and in

direct opposition to his own interest, (which could only be accounted for by a certain degree of mental aberration) he persisted in guarding his secret from every human being.

Several months had elapsed since their departure from Paris: they had already reached Rome, yet no amendment was visible in the state of young Beverley; indeed every succeeding day served rather to increase than diminish his malady; and his parents observed that the agitation and depression of his mind were augmented by the dreadful nature of the intelligence which reached them from France, where the murderous state of anarchy was nearly at its climax. They had been for some time without intelligence from the Marquis; at last a letter reached them, in which Monsieur d'Avrancourt announced his intention of dispatching his daughter into Italy, and earnestly entreated Lady Theodosia to take charge of her, until it was in his power to join them; his attachment and duty to his unhappy master not permitting him for the

moment to quit Paris. To this letter, (which to prevent subsequent disappointment was concealed from Arthur) a candid answer was returned. Beverley's supposed attachment to Julie was at once declared, and in short, her hand was formally demanded; though neither the General nor Lady Theodosia anticipated a favourable reply, since they could not imagine any pretext for the Marquis's failing to ratify the marriage treaty into which he had already entered. This communication remained unanswered; nor was any farther intelligence received from the D'Avrancourts; it was, therefore, concluded either that the Marquis had fallen a sacrifice to the sanguinary fury of the Revolutionists, or that he had felt offended at General Beverley's proposition; and both husband and wife congratulated themselves on the prudent precaution they had adopted, of concealing their request from their son. In the mean time, the accounts from Paris became every hour more afflicting; and upon one day in particular, when reports of a peculiarly gloomy

nature reached Rome, Arthur was observed to be in a state of more than usual depression, though he made no observation upon the subject to his parents; but retiring early to his apartment, he remained there for some hours, declining to attend the family repast. Towards dusk, however, he ordered his horse, and sallied forth; but this excited no surprise. It had been his constant habit since their arrival in Rome, to pass several hours of the evening either in wandering amidst the glorious ruins which are scattered around the precincts of the Campo Vaccino, or mounting his horse, he would enjoy the cool of twilight upon the banks of the Tiber. The night was, however, far advanced; he had exceeded, by some hours, his wonted ride; his parents became alarmed to the utmost degree. Day-light appeared, still he was absent: messengers were despatched in every direction. Every hour was a year of agony to the hearts of the miserable father and mother. Mid-day passed; still no tidings had been received. Evening approached, and

at length came intelligence that he had been discovered: but judge, reader, of the misery of his unfortunate relatives; he was brought back a corpse. His lifeless body had been found entangled amidst the reeds of the Tiber. He had been dead many hours.

CHAPTER II.

MANY weeks had elapsed ere the childless parents of Arthur Beverley had in any degree recovered from the shock produced by the awful event, which has been narrated in the preceding chapter. He—their only child, the united object of all their tenderness and pride,—the only remaining pillar of a long line of nobility was no more, and with him had perished all the dearest hopes and expectations of their own existence. Notwithstanding the number of emigrants who had quitted Paris, no precise accounts of the Marquis d'Avrancourt had been received: report said that he had escaped into Spain; but for the present, the minds of the General and his wife were not in a fit state

to seek for any details respecting the fate of their friend or his daughter.

The departure of the Beverleys from Rome took place as soon as it was possible for Lady Theodosia to be removed, and they immediately returned to Beverley Castle, the seat of the General's brother; to which place every thing belonging to their ill-fated child had been dispatched from Italy, previous to their quitting that country—and amongst these effects were the papers and writing-case of Mr. Beverley, which remained some months unexamined.

More than once the General had determined to undertake the task of perusing his son's papers; not from any idle motives of curiosity, but with the honourable intention of doing justice to his memory, by settling any unpaid debts, and fulfilling his last bequests, should any memoranda to that effect be discovered. Those, whose misfortune it has been to lose a wife, a child, a parent, or some dear friend, and who have felt all that painful agony which the performance of such a duty excites in the heart, may well understand the sufferings of

General Beverley, when he attempted this melancholy office. More than once his courage had failed; the recollection of his dearly loved son, and of his horrid death, rushed too fully upon his mind, and he shrunk from the task. At length, however, summoning all his fortitude, he proceeded to the examination of these papers; in addition to which, several letters with foreign post marks, addressed to Arthur, had been received subsequent to his death, and, though unopened, had been carefully preserved.

The first thing which met the eye of the General, on unclosing the writing-case, was a packet of letters. It is wonderful upon what apparently insignificant actions depend the most important and interesting events.

The immediate impulse of the General was to have destroyed these papers, and he had already advanced towards the fire for the purpose; but a movement of curiosity, awakened as it were by Providence, arrested his hand, and he resolved to examine some of the letters ere he committed them to the flames. Great was

his astonishment upon unfolding the letters, when he discovered not only that they were from Julie d'Avrancourt, but that she had been clandestinely married to his son. Enclosed in one of these letters was the portrait of the fair Julie herself, beaming in all the meridian loveliness which had captivated the hearts, and excited the admiration of all who beheld her at the most brilliant court in Europe, where she even shone conspicuous, though beauty and grace were the *appanage* of almost every woman around. Upon the reverse of this miniature, in which was enclosed a braid of hair, the following lines were engraved on a gold plate :—

"Le Souvenir présent céleste,
Ombre du bien que l'on n'a plus,
Est souvent le seul Bien qui reste,
Quand tous les autres sont perdus."

Although these letters repeatedly recurred to the sacred ties which had united his unfortunate child to Mademoiselle d'Avrancourt, and in one or two instances delicately alluded to the results ; yet no particulars were mentioned,

how or when the ceremony took place, or by what means the young couple were enabled to carry their clandestine plan into execution. One fact was however apparent, they had certainly been married; and, in despite of the death of his own child, this circumstance rekindled all the anxiety of the General to discover the fate of the Marquis and his daughter. The knowledge of Arthur's marriage, also accounted for another circumstance, which had deeply afflicted the Beverleys; this was no less than their discovering that Arthur had embraced the doctrine of the Romish Church, which he had probably done in order to facilitate his marriage.

Let not the motives which excited General Beverley's distress upon this occasion be mistaken; for there did not exist a shade of intolerance or bigotry in his enlightened and liberal mind. He was, it is true, a Protestant, firmly attached to the religion of the state; at the same time, upon the broad principle of equity and common justice, he was one of the most zealous, and not the least able supporters

of religious freedom within the walls of the Senate; and in all his worldly dealings, he practically exercised that tolerance which he advocated in the House. As long, however, as he saw his Roman Catholic friends and countrymen labouring under the most distressing restrictions, and invidious penalties; as long as he found them deprived of the common privileges and advantages enjoyed by the rest of their fellow subjects, and placed as it were, without the pale of the constitution; it was impossible for him not to feel the utmost distress at his only son's embracing those dogmas, the sincere adoption of which must infallibly subject him to the most inequitable and uncharitable disabilities, deprive him of his birthright, and render him almost incapable of devoting either his talents or his life to the service of his country.

The letters which had been addressed to Arthur, and received subsequent to the return of the family to England, next came under the General's observation. One of these was also from Julie, but its contents were equally

unsatisfactory with the rest, though it confirmed in a more positive manner the certainty of the marriage having taken place, together with its being ultimately ratified by the sanction of the Marquis. In this epistle, Mrs. Beverley, for so she must be called, reproached herself with having so long concealed her marriage from her parent, and spoke with the utmost feeling and repentance of her ingratitude in having deceived so kind a father, and declared her immediate determination of making every circumstance known to him. Several postscripts were added, the most important of which ran thus: "Papa knows all, all! We have his consent and forgiveness; in a day or two I am to proceed to join you; he will answer your Mamma's letter immediately." To these few words was added a hurried description of the excesses which were being committed by the populace, and of her own terror and alarm at the frightful events of which Paris was then the bloody theatre. The remaining letters were of much greater importance, and al-

though anonymous, revealed circumstances of the most unexpected nature.

It appeared by these letters that every preparation for the journey of Mrs. Beverley from Paris to Rome had been made on the evening previous to her intended departure, though the greatest secrecy was observed, lest the intelligence might awaken the jealousy of their enemies, and draw upon them the suspicion of the revolutionary Committee. It was not, therefore, until night-fall that the carriage was ordered to be packed, and directions given to the coachman to hold himself in readiness by break of day on the following morning; whilst the porter received strict orders to permit no one to enter or quit the hotel.

Having embraced his daughter, recommending her to be prepared at an early hour, the Marquis retired to his cabinet, and Julie endeavoured to seek a few hours repose; though it was nearly impossible for the terrified inhabitants of the Fauxbourg to close their eyes,

from the uproar caused by the tumultuous shouts of the mob, and the horrible yells of the savages, who, like hungry wolves were scouring the streets in search of prey.

The only individuals to whom d'Avrancourt had confided the secret of his daughter's intended "*évasion*" (for thus the departure of any distinguished person was termed by the Revolutionists) was to his own Maître d'Hôtel, an old and faithful servant, and to a young girl of the name of Rose, waiting-woman to Mrs. Beverley; and through the weakness rather than the absolute treachery of this latter person, the important secret was divulged.

Amongst the different persons who had appeared as candidates for the hand of Julie was the Chevalier Jules de Mainforte, nephew to the Marquis, and only surviving male relative of this puissant family. He was a young man of the most depraved character, and vicious habits; a determined libertine, gambler, and duellist; not less notorious in the regiment in which he served for the violence of his temper and vindictive disposition, than for the

fierce and repulsive expression of his features. In consequence, however, of his rank and connexions, he was well received in society, and, from his near relationship, was a frequent visitor at the Hôtel d'Avrancourt. It may well be imagined, that such an individual was not calculated to obtain the consent of the father, and still less the affections of the lady herself: in fact, Julie not only rejected him without hesitation, but even added some remarks which galled to the quick the irritable disposition of her cousin. This refusal had not, however, created any apparent difference in the manner of Jules towards his relatives; he continued as usual to be on good terms at the Hôtel d'Avrancourt, and, by a succession of the most hypocritical professions, contrived to ingratiate himself more than ever into the good graces of his uncle, though Julie never ceased to express her disgust and aversion for him in the most undisguised manner.

The seeds of vengeance, though they had not hitherto burst forth, long rankled in this man's heart, and he inwardly swore to revenge

himself in the most terrible manner, not only for the insult which his mortified vanity had received, but for the disappointment he suffered in not obtaining possession of the noble property, which alone excited his cupidity. The moment which the villain so ardently sighed for was near at hand. It was at length made known to the Marquis, that his nephew had imbibed the principles of the party so diametrically opposed to those of his family, and that he was a leading member of one of the Jacobinical clubs. Monsieur d'Avrancourt had made several endeavours to wean his relative from these doctrines, but having failed in his attempt, a rupture took place between them, and, for some weeks, Jules had not been admitted at the hotel. The unfortunate nobleman was, however, still ignorant that Citizen Gracchus Mainforte (for this was the name he had now assumed) was one of the most bloodthirsty of the Jacobinical leaders, acting in the united and odious capacities of spy, orator, conductor, and even executioner, to his Section.

This detestable wretch had contrived to seduce, and had continued upon intimate terms with Mrs. Beverley's attendant, Rose; not from any love for the deluded girl, but with the view of subsequently rendering her subservient to his plans. Rose had received directions from her brutal paramour to furnish him with early intelligence, in the event of his relatives attempting to quit the capital—a plan which he calculated they would most probably attempt to put in execution. With a view of not alarming the girl, (who, in despite of her own frailty, was warmly attached to her young mistress,) he persuaded Rose that this communication would be of service to the Marquis, and facilitate his Cousin's departure, through the influence which he possessed with the Revolutionary Committee. The weak girl believed all he said; and no sooner was she apprised of the intended departure of her mistress, than she hastened to communicate all she knew to her treacherous seducer, adding, that Madame Beverley (for her marriage had been declared some days at the hotel,) was intrusted with a large sum of money, together

with all the family jewels, and as much plate as could be removed.

Overjoyed at this information, which placed his unfortunate relations completely within his power, Mainforte hastened to the Commune, and denounced his uncle as a furious aristocrat, who was attempting a *complot* against the nation. In corroboration of this, he added, that the Marquis and his daughter were on the eve of quitting Paris to join the counter-revolutionary party, and for this purpose they were intrusted with a large sum of money by the Queen. For imputed crimes of a much less heinous nature than these were represented to be, some of the purest and most noble blood of France had been already shed. The enumeration of these offences, therefore, at once excited the fury of the monsters with whom Mainforte was in league: a warrant for the immediate arrest of the d'Avrancourts was issued, and the patriotic Gracchus himself was intrusted with the odious mission.

It was nearly midnight when the porter at the Hôtel d'Avrancourt was alarmed by a tu-

multuous uproar, accompanied by loud and reiterated commands to open the gate, in the name of the Committee of Public Safety—an order which the terrified menial dared not disobey. Scarcely had he time to comply with this mandate, or to alarm the household, ere the court was filled with a numerous band of wretches, armed with pikes and sabres, and decorated with all the disgusting insignia of the *sans culottes*, at the head of whom appeared the vile traitor, Gracchus Mainforte himself.

With the most savage shouts of "Vive la République!" "Vive la Nation!" intermingled with vociferations of "A bas les Aristocrates!" "A la lanterne les ennemis de la Patrie!" these monsters darted into the hotel, and scattered themselves through the apartments.

The Marquis, who had already retired to rest, was no sooner awake, and aware that his own hotel had been thus forcibly entered, than he seized his arms and rushed to the head of the grand staircase, where he encountered a body of these villains in the act of ascending. In an instant the foremost of the number lay

dead at his feet, and the jaw of another was shattered by a second shot; then casting himself amongst the assailants, with a degree of strength beyond his age, and with the desperation of a man who knew that, in either case of submission or defence, no mercy was in store for him, he continued not only to keep his adversaries at bay for several seconds, but mortally wounded two or three of the most forward and boldest of the band.

This brave resistance unsupported, could, however, be of little avail against such fearful odds. Pressed and hemmed in on every side by numerous pikes, he at length fell, pierced with an hundred wounds—a yell of triumph announcing his fall: in a moment his head was severed from his body, and fixed on a pike, while his mangled trunk was cast through the windows into the street, amidst deafening roars of "*Ca ira.*"

Mrs. Beverley, who slept in a distant part of the mansion, was no sooner aroused, than springing from her bed she endeavoured to hurry on some portion of her apparel; but ere this

could be accomplished, the door of her apartment was burst open, and a body of miscreants reeking with the blood of their victims stood before her, led by the accursed Mainforte, actually bearing the head of his murdered uncle upon a pike.

There was, indeed, something in the mere outward appearance of these ferocious wretches, amongst whom Gracchus was the most conspicuous, which might have appalled the stoutest and most adventurous heart, independent of every other accessory, which now added tenfold horror to their presence.

The garb of Jules was similar to that worn by the lowest *sans culottes;* whose dress, manners, and ferocity, the monster affected to imitate. It consisted of a short blue linen vest of coarse materials, such as are usually worn by the working classes in Paris; without either waistcoat or cravat. His shirt-collar, dripping with blood which trickled from the mangled head of his uncle, was open, and exposed a strong, short neck, and muscular chest, broad and shaggy as that of a bison. Around his

waist, was entwined a tri-coloured sash, in which were stuck a long butcher's knife, and a brace of pistols. His trowsers were of the same rough materials with the jacket, and appeared soiled and stiffened with blood or wine, and were held together with a couple of large metal buttons. On his feet were a pair of the commonest wooden sabots, in which a handful of straw supplied the place of the usual woollen socks. His hair, which according to the fashion of the day, was generally powdered and collected in a cue, now hung in black and disordered masses over his shoulders, ("*à la victime*" as it was afterwards termed,) giving an air of peculiar wildness and ferocity to a countenance, in which were already stamped the characteristics of every vile and detestable passion. Upon the summit of this horrible head was perched a red woollen cap, decorated with the tri-coloured cockade, making a complete finish to his diabolical and malignant appearance.

Such was the odious being who now appeared before the unhappy Mrs. Beverley, who with eyes starting from their sockets, and

her hands clasped together in all the agony of terror and surprise, stood motionless and horror struck, gazing upon the savages over whose features the lurid glare of two or three torches cast a sinister and almost hellish light. So great was the terror of the poor creature at the sudden apparition of these demons, that she did not immediately recognise the dreadful trophy borne by her inhuman cousin, to whose actual presence and identity she could indeed scarcely give credit, through the evidence of her senses.

This oversight was not lost upon the surrounding fiends, one of whom, with one hand seized the bloody head of the murdered nobleman, and held its distorted features close to the face of the miserable lady, whilst with the other hand he illuminated the ghastly object with a torch, exclaiming with a loud roar and laugh of diabolical malice; "*Quoi donc, chienne d'Aristocrate, tu ne connois pas ton père?*" In the mean time another fiend applying a torch to the hair, which, though drenched with gore, crackled and flared for a

moment, added "*Voici la tête d'Aristocrate à la braise.*" This detestable sally was more than sufficient: Mrs. Beverley had indeed recognised the fearful sight, even disfigured as it was with so many bloody gashes, and in an instant had fallen senseless at the feet of her dastardly persecutors.

In this state of insensibility, and almost nakedness, she was carried hastily down stairs, thrown into a hackney coach, and conveyed to the Conciergerie, preceded by a band of wretches, amongst the most vociferous and frantic of whom was a group of Poissardes, dancing and singing the Carmagnole around Jules Mainforte, who walked in front of the vehicle, still bearing the bleeding emblem of his patriotism, or, in more appropriate terms, the horrible proof of his fiend-like treachery and inhuman parricide.

The terrible shock which the unfortunate Julie had received from this sudden and appalling scene, this awful transition from all the joys of hope, love, tenderness and life, to that of despair, brutality, proscription and death,

combined with the rough usage to which she had been exposed, had the effect of accelerating an event which had not otherwise been anticipated for two or three months. Ere she had been many hours the inmate of her new and dreary abode, ere indeed reason was restored, nature yielded to the violence of the shock, and she became a mother.

Under what dreadful auspices was the legitimate descendant of two of the noblest houses in Europe first ushered into the world! The heir to so much wealth and honour was born in a loathsome and humid dungeon, surrounded by darkness, terror and despair; whilst she, the lovely being, whose presence had been alone sufficient to diffuse joy and happiness around her, whose mere wishes had been law to her fond parent and numerous attendants, at whose door half Paris had made anxious enquiries when the most trifling illness assailed her, who had known nought of life save its luxuries and delights, was now deserted, imprisoned, fatherless and forlorn—raving with mental and bodily suffering, deprived, in the

most trying hour, of the commonest medical assistance, without even the bare necessaries of food, or light, without even proper raiment to protect her delicate frame from the damps of her dungeon, with only a wretched bundle of straw for her couch.—Nature was her sole assistant, but Divine Providence, who watches with constant foresight over the fate of the lowest of its creatures, sent succour to the infant, and consolation to the miserable mother in a manner as little expected, as it was providential.

Fanchon, a young woman who had lived many years in the family of the Marquis, had been married with the assistance and sanction of Mademoiselle d'Avrancourt to Philipon, a sergeant in the Royal Guard. This brave man, having been deprived of an arm, had obtained, through the interest of Monsieur d'Avrancourt, the situation of under gaoler to the Conciergerie, where he had been at all times remarkable for the correctness and humanity of his conduct. No sooner were this worthy couple aware, that the miserable woman confided to their charge was the daughter of

their benefactor, than they determined to employ every means to alleviate her suffering. Surrounded as they were with spies and guards, it was impossible for them to attempt the escape of Mrs. Beverley, but they resolved at all risks to redeem the life of the infant, in defiance of the ferocious orders and threats of Jules. Ignorant of the ties of gratitude which bound the gaoler and his wife to their prisoner, that monster (who had been partly witness to the approaching agonies of his cousin, and had been informed of her marriage,) directed the Philipons to cast the aristocratical brat, as soon as it should be born, into the common sewer of the prison, promising them a handsome reward in case of compliance, but threatening immediate denunciation if they dared to disobey.

The moment, however, the poor innocent was ushered into the world, ere yet Mrs. Beverley was aware of her purpose, or that any other individual in the prison was acquainted with its birth, Fanchon carefully enveloped the little creature in the dress of her own infant,

conveyed it to her own apartment, and at night-fall carried it to the Foundling Hospital, having taken note of the peculiar marks by which it might be recognised at any future period. In order to insure his own safety as well as that of the infant, Philipon wrapt up a roll of linen, and in the presence of two or three of the turnkeys cast it into the fosse of the prison, declaring it to be the child of the traitress d'Avrancourt.

This stratagem succeeded; and Mainforte gloried in having destroyed the last scion of his family. Madame Philipon, in the mean time, communicated to the unfortunate captive the means she had adopted to shield the baby from the sanguinary Jules. Maternal love, which forms such a striking and angelic feature in the character of woman, now overcame every other feeling in the breast of Mrs. Beverley, and she submitted with greater resignation to her own fate, since she was assured not only of the life but the present safety of her child. More than a month, however, elapsed, and she still continued to endure all the

terrible agonies of suspense, debarred from all communication with her friends, and without hearing any thing relative to her own doom. About six weeks, however, from the period of her incarceration she was one day suddenly startled by the appearance of Mainforte, who entered her cell unattended—it was the first time she had seen him since the horrid murder of her parent, and her blood recoiled to her heart with horror and disgust.

I must pass over the details of this interview, which would harrow up the feeling of the most profligate and abandoned mind. Suffice it to say, that if the fortune of Julie had previously excited the base cupidity of the monster, and urged him to the most atrocious crimes, his brutal passions were now not less awakened by the personal charms of his victim, tarnished and enfeebled as they were by misery and imprisonment. He declared his ability and willingness to save her life, (a promise he never intended to fulfil) and boasted of the influence he possessed with the Revolutionary Committee; but to this offer he attached conditions

which the virtuous Julie rejected with contempt. His infamous overtures were spurned with even greater disgust and scorn by Mrs. Beverley in fetters, than his more honourable proposals had been refused by Mademoiselle d'Avrancourt when she was mistress of her hand and liberty.

Foaming with rage and every detestable passion, the villain quitted her dungeon, breathing the most horrid threats of vengeance, and taunting her not only with the destruction of her infant, but with the knowledge of her marriage, the certificates of which he said had fallen into his hands amongst the papers of his uncle.

It appeared that the monster lost no time in consummating his accursed promises, for the day had not yet drawn to a close ere Madame Beverley was summoned to appear before the Committee of Public Safety, where, although still weak and languid, she entered with a degree of firmness and modest resolution, which bespoke the courage of her mind, as well as the innocence of her heart.

Although her judges consisted of some of the

most merciless terrorists of that period, yet the extreme beauty of her person, her calm dignified looks, the serenity and grace of her manner, seemed to have affected even their ferocious minds. They simultaneously gazed at her with surprise, an involuntary expression of admiration burst from their lips, and they whispered one with the other. Marat, even the brutal Marat, the most cold-blooded and sanguinary of the hateful triumvirate, appeared moved with pity. The stern, ill-favoured countenance, and stunning voice of Danton softened with commiseration; and into the bosom of the cowardly, the coxcomb Robespierre, where compassion never had found entrance before, a gleam of sensibility forced its way. Even the *sans culottes* and *poissardes*, who filled the galleries, and who usually pressed forward on similar occasions to enjoy the spectacle of misery and revel in the suffering of the victims, now shrunk back, and remained silent.

Mainforte, trembling, not with emotion, but with rage and fear lest his victim should escape, alone remained unmoved, and with a degree of

patriotism which even astounded the Triumvir, loudly demanded her immediate trial; though, in fact, to call the process of condemnation adopted at that period by such a title, is a mere mockery of the forms of law, justice, and humanity. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the subsequent proceedings. Where her death was predetermined, all attempt at defence was superfluous. She heard her doom with resignation, forgave the wretch who had betrayed her to destruction, and being immediately placed on the fatal tumbril, was conveyed to the square of the revolution, where in a few minutes she had ceased to breathe.

No sooner had General Beverley recovered from the sorrowful impressions called forth by this distressing narrative, than he hastened to communicate its substance to Lady Theodosia, who coincided in the necessity of immediately dispatching confidential messengers into France, not only for the purpose of recovering their grandson, should the child still be alive, but if possible to obtain the official certificates of the marriage of its unhappy parents. Through

the kind assistance of General Lafayette and Dumourier, with whom the Beverleys had been on intimate terms, the first object was quickly effected. The child, easily recognised by the marks which providence in its wonderful ordination had imprinted on its person, was delivered to General Beverley's agent; and in the course of a few weeks arrived safely at Beverley Castle; but every attempt on the part of the French gentlemen to discover either the marriage register, the priest who performed the ceremony, or any of the witnesses, proved completely abortive, and the idea of applying to Mainforte was, of course, considered fruitless.

CHAPTER III.

ALTHOUGH General Beverley had not succeeded in obtaining any positive documents by which it would be in his power to substantiate the marriage of his son with Mademoiselle d'Avrancourt, yet no doubt remained upon his mind, or those of his friends, that the ceremony had taken place: it was therefore determined to bring up the infant as heir to the title and estates of the Roxmere Peerage, to which General Beverley succeeded on the demise of his elder brother; and consequently neither pains nor expense was spared in affording to young Arthur (for thus the boy was christened) an education suitable to his rank and prospects.

I shall not fatigue my readers with a prolonged description of the various qualifications

of the juvenile foundling; these must be left to develope themselves in the course of the narrative: I am, however, bound to say that he appeared to have inherited all the quickness and elasticity of mind of his father, without any of its exaggerated romance, and over-strained enthusiasm; and that in despite of his premature birth, and the horrible circumstances attending it, he evinced no ill effects, nor retained any other vestige of that sad event, save the mark to which I have alluded; which consisted in the impression of a bloody hand, traced with extraordinary distinctness by the impress of nature on his chest.

It was Lord Roxmere's desire that his grandson should commence his career in the army, leaving it entirely to the young man's future choice, either to continue in, or to renounce that gallant profession to which so many of his ancestors had dedicated their blood and fortunes. From his earliest years, Arthur was consequently instructed in every science, inured to every manly exercise, and above all, nurtured in those principles of integrity and honour which are so indispensable in a profession

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where the success of its members depends as much upon the most unblemished probity, as it does upon mental energy and personal courage. His frame, naturally robust and healthy, was rendered still more vigorous by the species of exercise to which he was daily habituated, and although he was the destined heir to a princely fortune, and future lord of a magnificent domain, no peasant's son could be reared more simply, or with fewer effeminate indulgences. Thus, at an early age, he gave proofs of a degree of undaunted courage and presence of mind, not often to be met with in youths at so early a period of life.

Desirous that his grandson should reap all the advantages of his rank, as well as of the most cultivated education, ere he entered the service, Lord Roxmere solicited, and had the honour to obtain for him the appointment of Page to the King. Taking advantage of Arthur's return from Winchester for the holidays, the Earl carried him to Windsor, and the presentation of the youthful servant to his illustrious master took place on the Terrace.

The effect produced upon the mind of the

young page by the splendid landscape which met his eye from this spot, may be easily imagined. The fair prospect made him forget for a while the novel delights of his glittering uniform, the charms of his new sword, and even the cause of his being brought to Windsor, and he gazed with unfeigned astonishment on the scene, whose tranquil beauty was heightened by contrast with the animation and gaiety of the merry groups occupying the broad walks of the Terrace, or filling the space beneath.

Accustomed even as Arthur Beverley had been to the less splendid, but wilder grandeur of his grandfather's residence, he yet turned with wonder from the beauties of the landscape to admire the mighty pile towering above him; which, independent of the historical interest attached to its massive walls, appeared admirably adapted for the residence of its venerable sovereign. There was something not only in its commanding position, but in the sober uniformity of its general aspect at that period, not less accordant with the simple character of its aged master, than it was consistent with the stability of the mighty nation over whom he ruled.

Above, all was silence and solemn majesty; beneath, reigned life, movement and hilarity. Hundreds of persons of both sexes, many of the highest rank, were assembled in groups, or moving to and fro, anxiously awaiting the appearance of the royal party. Some were listening with delight to the animating music of the King's favourite militia regiment, stationed at the south-eastern angle of the Terrace, whilst others were collected around the splendid band of the Blues, placed at the opposite extremity.

Arthur's admiration was suddenly averted from these various and novel sights to a more interesting object, by the striking of the castle clock, which seemed to be understood as a signal for the immediate appearance of the punctual monarch. The cry of "their Majesties, their Majesties are coming," ran along the line of pedestrians, who immediately collected on each side of the walk, whilst the Earl hastened with his young charge to station himself near the flight of steps in the eastern face, by which their Majesties usually descended upon the Terrace.

The heart of the page beat within him, as

he perceived the turret-door open, whence issued one or two household officers, apparently to announce the royal party. In a moment all eyes were turned in that direction, and a general silence prevailed, until suddenly both bands pealed forth the national anthem, whose echoes flung back by the walls of the castle, were again repeated as they struck upon the bosom of the river. At the same instant the good old prince, followed by several members of his august family, and preceded by Colonel Disbrowe, the Queen's Vice-chamberlain, made his appearance, supporting his royal consort on one arm, whilst he slightly felt the steps with his cane, as he cautiously descended the flight of stone stairs.

The appearance of the monarch was greeted by a loud and deafening hurrah, from the multitude in the Park, as well as those upon the Terrace, and for a few seconds the air reverberated with shouts of "Long live the King!"

It was the heartfelt hurrah of a brave, loyal, and independent people, enjoying the blessing of liberty under the paternal dominion of a beloved and just prince; a people conscious of their

own strength and security, whilst they saw the rest of the European nations bleeding beneath the iron tyranny of the almost universal despot. It is true, this shout was the sister hurrah to that dread battle-cry which has rung the knell of England's enemies from the shores of the Nile to the plains of Waterloo; but it was the reverse of that brutal roar which is said by envious foreigners, galled by their own chains and defeats, (pleasantly termed *disasters*,) to be the only mode by which "the Islanders" can express their sentiments of anger, or rejoicing;* impudently asserting that there exists no difference between the ferocious exclamations of the mob who surrounded the Gladiators' ring, and the enthusiastic, irresistible chorus of the British charge — no distinction between the drunken uproar of the vagabonds who attend upon the footsteps of some Jacobin orator, and the joyful expression of a loyal people greeting a revered monarch.

From the simple mode of life of the King, the condescending, confident manner in which he daily showed himself to the people, his con-

* See Foy's Peninsular War.

stant habit of mixing, as it were, with his subjects; the interest he appeared to feel in the most trivial circumstances attending them; as well as the tenacity with which his wonderful memory retained the recollection not only of persons, but of trifling events forgotten almost by the individuals to whom they had occurred;—independent of all this, his many virtues as a man doubly endeared him to his subjects as a King.

To mix in the crowd, and attend to the eager questions of the common people, whose position prevented them from obtaining a glimpse of the monarch's features, or to listen to the replies, one might have imagined that each of the spectators was talking of his father rather than of a mighty and powerful sovereign; so familiar was he to them all, so deeply did each feel interested in his health and welfare.

The youthful Page was not more astonished at the unaffected affability, and good-humoured condescension with which the good old man addressed himself to those who had the honour of being personally known to him, than with the paternal kindness with which he caressed the different children, whose parents lifted

them in their arms, as the Royal pair approached; nor was it the least interesting sight to observe their Majesties followed by a group of their own illustrious offspring; for no monarch, and but few private individuals, could boast of being surrounded by a more numerous, or finer family, than George the Third. The eye of the spectator wandered with pleasure from the manly and imposing figures of the Dukes of York, Kent, Cumberland, and Cambridge, to the benevolent and interesting countenances of their royal sisters, amidst whom, the Princess Mary was then distinguished for the beauty of her features, her engaging manners, as well as the peculiarity of her white-laced boots.

The costume of the King and Queen was not less simple and unaffected than their manners. The dress of the former consisted of the dark blue undress Windsor uniform, without any other ornament than its red collar, and the star of the garter. His good-humoured full countenance was rendered more prominent by his small muslin cravat, and brown wig, with its projecting curls, on which rested his

low triangular hat, fastened up behind with a plain gold loop, surmounted by the national cockade. The simplicity of his lower garment, and plain white waistcoat, which as well as his coat were cut in the old fashion, was relieved by the broad blue ribbon of the garter, and the embossed metal buttons of the uniform, which, with white silk stockings, short quartered shoes and gold buckles, completed his costume. His figure, though bent a little forward, might still be called erect; he walked firmly, and showed few symptoms of his advanced age, and had it not been for the position of the cane, with which he now and then felt the ground, a spectator would scarcely have discovered any indication of that deplorable blindness with which it was the will of Providence to afflict him.

Her Majesty's appearance corresponded in simplicity with that of the King; her gown, though of rich materials, was plain, matronly, and becoming her advanced time of life. On her shoulders she wore a white satin tippet, trimmed with lace; her grey hairs were sheltered, though not concealed, by a modest cap;

the miniature of the King set in diamonds was her only ornament, and in her peculiarly small and delicate hand she bore an embroidered fan.

No sooner did the Queen recognise Lord Roxmere than she immediately paused, and having mentioned his name to her royal consort, she gently, almost imperceptibly, guided the Monarch towards the Earl.

"How d'ye do, how d'ye do, my Lord," exclaimed the King; "welcome to the Terrace. It is long since we have seen you here. No courtier, eh! I hear Beverley is finer than Windsor, finer than the Castle, eh! It has long been my wish to pay you a visit; but you know the King cannot always do as he pleases, cannot always please himself: but why are you such a stranger?"

"Sire," replied the Earl, "your Majesty is aware—"

"Yes, yes," returned the Sovereign interrupting him, "I know you have been better employed, doing good, taking care of the tenantry; making all happy, all happy about you; exchanged the parade for the drill plough, eh?

I always consider it a compliment," added the King, still smiling at his own joke, "when such men as your Lordship make their appearance here, or at court;" and as the Earl bowed, and was about to return thanks for his Sovereign's condescending speech, the latter resumed with much volubility, "If the King of France, poor man, had possessed a few hundred such loyal opponents to his measures and his ministry as yourself, my Lord, he would still have peaceably occupied the Tuilleries, and Europe never would have known what my English are capable of doing for their country."

"And King, Sire," rejoined the Earl.

"Great nation! loyal, good people! grateful to them from my heart!" replied the Monarch. "But eh, my Lord, where's Lady Roxmere, my old friend Lady Roxmere?"

"Sire," returned the Earl, seriously, "for many years she has not made her appearance in the world."

"True, true," rejoined the King; "God's will be done! I can feel for her, my Lord, deeply"—and as he spoke, a tear appeared

to moisten his almost sightless eye-balls, and his voice became tremulous with passing emotion, probably produced by the recollection of the recent loss of his own beloved daughter;* then approaching his face nearer to the ear of Lord Roxmere, he added, "She may enjoy her sorrow, my Lord, in retreat and solitude; it is a consolation I do not possess; more fortunate than I am—I must often wear a smiling face for the public, though my heart be oppressed with domestic sorrows—Kings are supposed not to feel like other people, not feel like others, eh?"

"The English, Sire," answered the Earl, "think far differently of your Majesty: they have the happiness to see you constantly among them; they not only know the goodness and sensibility of your Majesty's heart, but the whole nation feels with you, and for you on every occasion."

* It is scarcely necessary to observe, that, in this, as well as in other instances, some trifling anachronisms will be detected; I must, therefore, entreat my readers to be indulgent, and to bear in mind that this is Story, not History.

"I believe it,—good people, good people," again repeated the Monarch, and then after a moment's pause, he exclaimed, "but eh! where's your grandson, where's my new page?"

"Here, Sir," said the Princess Elizabeth, kindly taking Arthur's hand, and drawing him closer towards her royal parent, who, placing his hand first on the boy's shoulder, and then upon his head, exclaimed, "How old, how old?" and, without waiting for a reply, added, "I remember; tall for his age,—a seven months child too, eh! eh! so much the better—tell him it was the same case with me,—good constitution for all that—live long yet, please God, please God!" and then he added in a whisper, "hope he may have as many children—no danger of the title becoming extinct."

"God grant," rejoined Lord Roxmere, "that he may grow up to resemble your Majesty in every other point, and, that he may be as much respected by his own small circle, as you, Sire, are beloved by the millions over whom you reign."

"What's he to be, what profession?" demanded the King.

"In the army, Sire," replied the Earl.

"So much the better. What school is he at?"

"Winchester, Sire."

"Eh, what! Winchester!" exclaimed the Sovereign; "good school, excellent school; but why didn't you send him to Eton?"

"Winchester," replied Lord Roxmere, "has been the hereditary school of my family since the foundation of the college."

"Great scholars," retorted the monarch, "excellent scholars, I have no doubt—can't play at cricket, though they have beaten us once; can't row, can't row, eh! There they are, always have them under my eye," and the good-natured old man turned towards the river, and placing his hand above his eyes to shade them from the glare of the sun, and gazing with that twinkling emotion of the eye-lids, that upward vacant look, which bespoke his increasing blindness, he added, addressing Arthur, "Look there, past seven, past seven! up at Surly Hall,—Saint's day, half holyday —ducks and green peas,—doesn't it make your

mouth water, eh !—what, what ! ought to have sent him to Eton, the only school !"

"They say your Majesty spoils all the boys," rejoined the Earl, amused at the eagerness with which the kind-hearted prince spoke of his favourite seminary, not less than at the accuracy with which he appeared to be acquainted with the amusements and occupations of the boys.

"What, spoil them ! it is not true, I assure you," said his Majesty, smiling. "I never spoil any of my children. Ask the Queen—get them a holyday now and then, and, I believe the doctor is more rejoiced at it than the boys themselves ; and then," added he, laughing, "I frighten them well sometimes. Some years past, I saw two urchins shooting in my back preserve,—both shirked in a ditch ; gave them a view-holla ! caught them, and took away their guns ; didn't know me, took me for a keeper, and offered me half-a-crown to let them off, and said they would tell the King ; they were sure he wouldn't mind their killing a hare. Frightened them out of their wits,

when I said who I was, and that I should complain to the doctor; instead of which, however, I sent them a few pheasants and a hare, upon their promising not to poach again; and they kept their word. Both peers, both peers now, and two of the strictest game-preservers in England," added the King, laughing; "a proof of the saying, that an old poacher makes the best keeper, eh, eh!" After addressing a few more kind words to the Earl and his grandson, the royal party continued their walk, and the hilarity of their Majesties, as well as that of the by-standers, was shortly excited by an incident, which though puerile and insignificant in itself, sufficiently proved the kind and condescending manner with which the King conversed with his juvenile subjects.

The Princess Elizabeth having recognised a lady, who was waiting amongst the crowd, with her child in her arms, her Royal Highness mentioned her name to the King, who immediately stopped, and after accosting the mother, addressed the child, "How old, how old are you, eh?"

"God save the King, and d—n the French!" screamed forth the little boy.

"Eh, what, what! don't swear," rejoined the Monarch, smiling at this patriotic reply: "What's your name?"

"George, George; God save King George, and no wooden shoes!" again answered the child, waving his hat. "I say, I say," continued he, "I have got some Guinea pigs."

"Have you, indeed? eh, where, where did you get them?" demanded the Sovereign, exceedingly diverted.

"D—n the French! they've got no tails," responded the boy.

"Eh, what, no tails!" exclaimed the King, laughing heartily, "no tails, no tails, how came that about?"

"God save the King! he gave them no tails. Papa calls them *sans culottes*," returned the little patriot. This reply drew forth additional mirth from the Monarch, who left his young subject shouting with joy at his Majesty's promise of increasing his juvenile menagerie, by the addition of some rabbits; a promise which

the good old man faithfully fulfilled on the following day. The Earl and his grandson now quitted the Terrace to prepare for the evening party at the Castle, to which both had the honour of being invited.

Before eight o'clock, those persons who had been commanded to wait upon their Majesties, assembled in the Queen's apartments, and precisely as the clock struck, the Royal Family entered the rooms. After conversing a few minutes with the circle, the Queen was conducted to her chair, close to which were also seated two or three of the Princesses, whilst the King and the rest of the party continued standing. Tea and other refreshments were then served by the pages, during which time the private band, stationed in the adjoining room, played various selections from Handel, and others of his Majesty's favourite composers. Presently, the Queen's Vice-chamberlain announced that the card-tables were in readiness, and the Queen, leaning upon the arm of the Duke of York, proceeded to occupy the place prepared for her, where she was joined by the Princess Elizabeth, the Duke of Cambridge,

and those distinguished persons who had been selected to form her Majesty's party. Other tables were also prepared, at which some of the Royal Family and attendants took their places, and her Majesty, having received her purse from her lady in waiting, entered with animation into her favourite game of Commerce. In the mean time the King, whose increasing blindness prevented his enjoying any game of cards, continued standing in conversation with some of his guests, or listening to the music, now and then approaching the card-tables, and addressing a few words to the Queen and the other players. Before nine, however, he made his bow to the party, and, attended by his private secretary, Colonel Taylor, retired to his cabinet, where he transacted business until the hour of rest, which rarely exceeded ten o'clock.

Arthur, in the mean time, had ensconced himself in a corner with one or two other pages of his own age; and it was easy to perceive by the countenances of the youths, and their fruitless endeavours to suppress their inclination to sleep, that in their young minds the honour of assisting at a Court party was not equivalent

to its tedium; nor was it without extreme pleasure that he witnessed its termination. A few minutes before ten, he saw the Princess Elizabeth make some observation to the Queen, who, shortly after, putting on her gloves, thus gave the signal for the party to rise, and ere the clock finished striking, her Majesty, courtseying to the circle, bade them good night and retired, and in a few minutes every one had left the Castle.

It was the first and last time that Arthur ever saw his Royal master. Ere many months, the darkness which clouded the sight of the revered old Monarch, extended itself over his mind. The most awful visitation with which it is possible for Divine Providence to afflict living man, was then hanging over his venerable head. In a short time he was lost to himself, his family, and subjects. The towers which had so often echoed to the gay sounds of music, the Terrace where his presence had spread joy and hilarity, were converted into a scene of solitude, silence, and mourning. He was morally no more. The banner of England, floating above the battlements of the Castle,

alone announced his physical being, whilst the solitary and shaded outline of the northern turret gloomily pointed out to his people, the narrow space where their beloved Sovereign was destined to drag out the remaining days of his negative existence.

CHAPTER IV.

ARTHUR Beverley, who in due time attained his eighteenth year, had, however, seen little of London, or, indeed, of what is termed society, save that of the neighbouring nobility and gentry, or that which Lord Roxmere received at Beverley Castle. His holidays had been constantly passed at this magnificent abode, where, in fact, the Earl and Countess remained nearly the whole year, and there expended the major portion of their princely income. Happy as the days were long had been the life of Arthur, who was each day indulged to the utmost extent of his wishes, in the enjoyment of field sports, and every manly exercise, as soon as he had performed his allotted studies. To assist him in this latter duty, Lord Roxmere had

engaged, during the vacation, the assistance of a Mr. Delmore, the curate of the parish; a widower, who resided with his only daughter at a small cottage on the outskirts of the Park.

Amongst the numerous sources of amusement which the vicinity of the Castle afforded, was that of sailing. It was Arthur's favourite recreation; and in a short time he became not only an excellent seaman, but a most expert and intrepid swimmer. He was permitted, from an early age, to accompany the fishermen on their excursions; and he thus learned to endure hardship, cold, and fatigue, at a period of life when few boys are allowed to wander from the nursery. Often, in boisterous weather, he would attend these brave men, and share their perilous and laborious occupations; setting an example of endurance and courage to the young fisher-lads, which even surprised their hardy parents.

So bold and daring had he become, that he did not hesitate to dash into the ocean when the flood-tide was making with tremendous violence towards the shore; and even in the middle of winter would swim to land, when it appeared almost impossible for any but a South Sea

islander to have forced his way through the surf.

Lord Roxmere had always encouraged his grandson in his taste for the sea; not with any desire that he should embrace the noble profession of a sailor, but on the principle that the pleasures of a great maritime people should in some measure be connected with that element to which they are indebted, not only for their independence, wealth, and security, but for the greatest portion of their national glory. The Earl had built a splendid yacht, and had enrolled himself as a member of the Club, because he conceived that there could not exist a nobler method of expending a portion of his large income, than in the encouragement as a matter of pleasure, of that science, which, on a grand scale, forms the boast of England, and the terror of the world. To blend utility with amusement is always an admirable employment of wealth and time: and what can reflect greater credit upon a country, or be more important in a constitutional point of view, than to see not only the noblest and most wealthy of the land, but the very sovereigns themselves encouraging, by

their presence and example, an attachment to that ocean on which our gallant countrymen, with any thing like equality of force or circumstances, can fear no rivals?

The situation of Beverley was admirably adapted for this purpose, from its immediate contiguity to a sea-port. The castle was a magnificent pile of building, of great extent and antiquity; a part, consisting of a lofty octangular tower, having been constructed, according to tradition, during the Saxon Heptarchy; and, indeed, it still retained its Saxon appellation of the 'Geiersherd,' or Vultures' Nest, and at present formed one of the line of fire-beacons established along the coast, in consequence of the threatened invasion. Seaward, the massive walls, supported by immense buttresses, skirted the margin of the ocean, and were rendered inaccessible by tremendous, disjointed precipices, whose bases were washed by the billows, which, during spring tides and violent gales, often lashed up their foam over the very battlements. To the east, the cliffs, though broken and disordered, presented a lesser degree of ruggedness, and gradually decreased in height and wildness,

as they stretched along the coast, until they finally merged into fine sloping banks, and a wide sandy beach. Southward, a beautiful lawn, divided from the Park by a deep ha-ha, approached the margin of the *fossé*, which, together with its drawbridge, portcullis, and defences, were preserved, as nearly as possible, in the same order in which they had been originally constructed. This face was divided by four semicircular bastions, crowned with machiolated battlements, in the central curtain of which, *protected by two smaller crenelated turrets, was situated the entrance*, over which projected a beautiful oriel window, filled with painted glass, and supported by gothic brackets; whilst several smaller turrets, of various forms, ornamented with pinnacles and spindrels, arose in different parts of the vast building. The formal character of the Saxon architecture, its small square windows and horizontal scrolls, had been exchanged, at a later period, for the more lively ornaments and pointed forms of the florid gothic; whose rich and graceful bends, grotesque figures, and varied carvings, together with the ivy which mantled round the walls,

here and there interspersed with the lustrous tints of the Virginian creeper, added a picturesque and venerable air to the general outline.

From the windows the eye was delighted with a prospect of majestic beauty. Seaward, lay a noble bay, whose shores stretched themselves in the form of an irregular semicircle for many miles to the east and west: here, clothed with timber, and rising in a gentle swell from the beach; there, springing up in all the bold and fantastic grandeur and sublimity of barrenness; whilst several small creeks intersected the line of coast, before one of which the black summits of some dangerous rocks, called by the fishermen the "Shark's jaw," showed, ever and anon, their disjointed and treacherous points, as the waves of the sea rose and sunk around them. The eastern prospect was bounded by a bold and precipitous headland, projecting far into the ocean, and crowned with a lighthouse; whilst that on the west was marked by a huge conglomeration of red and grey rocks, through which the waters had perforated several apertures, presenting the distant aspect of the ruins of some gigantic aqueduct.

The interior of the building corresponded, in every respect, with its outward character, and was fitted up in a style which bespoke not only the antiquity and wealth, but the taste of the successive proprietors of this noble residence. The whole neighbourhood, as well as the small sea-port, which took its name from the family, bore an aspect of prosperity and happiness, which did the utmost honour to its munificent landlord. Strange as it may seem, two classes of men alone appeared to be excluded from the general prosperity;—these were attornies and sectarian preachers. Of the first, several had repeatedly tried the experiment of obtaining a secure and profitable footing, but had as often terminated their endeavours by removing to some spot more fertile in litigation; therefore, upon approaching the town, and observing the prettiest villa in the neighbourhood, surrounded by its rich paddocks, thriving plantations, gardens, and conservatories, one was not informed, as is usually the case, that its proprietor was an attorney. The other individuals alluded to were equally unsuccessful; for although Lord Roxmere was a man of the most tolerant prin-

ciples, and threw no obstacles in the way of those who differed from himself in matters of faith; and although he warmly advocated the Catholic Claims, and voted in favour of the Dissenters, yet he exerted his utmost power and ability, both by precept and example, to uphold, by just and fair means, the established religion of the State.

In Mr. Delmore the Earl found an able, pious, and tolerant coadjutor. Not only did this worthy man preach the word to the ear, but practise it to the eye; occupying himself with the physical as well as spiritual wants of his parishioners—visiting them in sickness, conveying consolation and relief to them in adversity, rejoicing with them in prosperity, and joining, as far as was consistent with his ministry, in their merriment and pleasures. Although a rigid observer of the duties of his holy calling, yet he was not one of those who walked forth clothed in moroseness and asperity: he did not interpret the mild tenets of his Saviour to be a religion of austerity and ascetism; neither did he think that mortification and bitterness of spirit could be more ac-

ceptable offerings to the Divine Being, than unoffending gaiety and joyful thanksgiving: he did not consider innocent amusements as the road to damnation; nor look upon a cheerful countenance, or the expressions of mirth and joviality, as the certain symbols of one upon whom the gates of mercy would be closed.

To add still more importance to Mr. Delmore's functions, he was intrusted with the dispensation of his noble patron's numerous bounties: thus, from Mr. Delmore's constant intercourse with his parishioners, and the confidence placed in him by all classes, Lord Roxmere's charities flowed into proper channels, and he became acquainted with the necessities, as well as the dispositions, of his tenantry. With such an example before them, and with constant facilities for divine worship, both in the chapel of the Castle and in Beverley church, it is hardly to be wondered that the parishioners were steadfast to the mother church, and that the roving preachers or sectarians, whenever they made their appearance, found few auditors, save some few idle fisher-lads, or a score of crabbed, disappointed old women, who

delighted in the bitter doctrines and bombastic nonsense which these ranters generally put forth.

The Reverend Henry Delmore, the clergyman to whom I have alluded, was an amiable and highly accomplished gentleman, who had been a Fellow of King's College, where he was as much distinguished for his acquirements in every branch of classical and polite literature, as he was remarkable for the gentleness and excellence of his character. His talents had early brought him into notice; and he was scarcely inducted into Holy Orders, ere he was appointed domestic chaplain to a nobleman, in whose family he proceeded to reside as tutor. This appointment, which so often paves the way to the highest ecclesiastical honours, unfortunately proved the ruin of Mr. Delmore.

The sister of his pupil was a young and lovely creature; kind, simple, and unaffected. Daily, hourly intercourse with an amiable and beautiful woman, was a dangerous trial for the heart of any young man. For a length of time, however, Delmore bravely combated the temptation into which he was being drawn,

and almost summoned courage to abandon his pupil, and to fly the peril; but human nature was unequal to the effort. As a bird before the fascinating glances of the rattle-snake, he lingered, and at last fell.

Forgetting the worldly distance which separated him from the object of his passion, and the inevitable consequences which must ensue, he declared his sentiments—unfortunately, they were mutual. In an evil hour the young couple eloped, and were married—the indignant nobleman banished his daughter for ever from his sight, and to the moment of his death refused to see her again. Through the intercession of a mutual friend, he obtained the curacy of Beverley from the late Lord Roxmere; and here, in a few months, he buried his young wife, who died broken-hearted at the relentless severity of her father, leaving an only child, a girl, some months younger than Arthur.

A more amiable or more lovely creature than Lucy Delmore could scarcely be imagined: her beauty, however, was not of that regular and imposing character which strikes at first sight, nor indeed were any of her fea-

tures, taken separately, remarkable for their perfection; but there was a degree of harmony, delicacy, and intelligence in the whole, which rendered her, upon nearer contemplation, eminently attractive and interesting. Every moment which Delmore could spare from his parochial duties was devoted to the moral and intellectual improvement of his child, and the fair pupil amply repaid the labours of her preceptor. With more information than is usually to be met with even in young men of her age, she was free from the slightest symptom of pedantry. Highly accomplished, yet timid and unassuming, she neither oppressed one with her knowledge, nor obtruded her opinions unasked. She had all the charms and natural graces of a beautiful girl, without the smallest particle of conceit or coquetry; she had all the acquirements of a woman of talent and instruction, without any of the would-be pretensions of a blue.

Aware that his child would be left destitute at his death, Delmore had endeavoured to give her such an education as might render her competent to undertake the situation of governess,

and thus secure her, at least, from want: he was only deterred from putting this plan into execution by the kindness of his noble patron.

From their tenderest infancy, Arthur and little Lucy were constant companions: they partook of the same studies, shared the same recreations, and were rarely separated, save when Black Monday carried off the former to return to Winchester. As they both advanced in age, these sentiments of infantine regard ripened into feelings which neither well comprehended; but Lucy imagined that it would be impossible ever to love two brothers as much as she did Arthur; whilst he fancied that he should be the happiest creature in existence, if he had two or three such sisters as Lucy. What was the real state of his sentiments towards his fair playfellow he could not exactly define; but he never was more happy than during his lessons, for then Lucy was near him, sharing and emulating his studies. If caught in a shower when riding, his pony would gallop towards Delmore's residence as naturally as if the curacy had been its own stable; whilst its master always fancied that the nearest road

to the Castle from every point of the compass led him by the same spot. The most beautiful flowers in Lady Roxmere's conservatory, somehow or another, found their way into the modest vase which stood on Lucy's table; the finest fish Arthur caught were sure also to visit the Parsonage;—in short, the same voyage awaited both fruit and game; and it was with difficulty that the worthy pastor could place any bounds to the generous attentions of his juvenile purveyor.

During tempestuous weather, the young people drew, read, and studied together; when fine, they rambled through the grounds, or visited the cottages of the poor, administering to the wants of the sick and necessitous. It was a beautiful sight to see this young and lovely couple entering the abode of poverty and misfortune: for innocence and beauty, health and manliness, never assumed a more gratifying form, than when contrasted with the age, sickness, and decrepitude they came to succour;—it is human nature under its most divine form. Thus the blessings of the widow, and the prayers of the fatherless, attended them; whilst the

applause of their parents, and, above all, the delicious sensations which arise from the performance of beneficent actions, sweetened their existence with joy and contentment.

An interruption to these peaceful enjoyments was about to take place: the gallant regiment of the Line, in which Arthur had lately obtained a commission, having received sudden orders for foreign service, he was consequently obliged to join forthwith. Occupied with the novel delights of examining swords, trying on uniforms, and preparing his camp equipage, Arthur had little time, for the first few days, to think of Lucy or himself; but as the hour of his departure approached, his spirits began to flag; and he at last discovered, upon sounding his own heart, that his attachment to Lucy was far more tender, at least more ardent, than that which he could have felt for a sister; and that, had it not been for the thoughts of quitting her, he could have left home with less regret.

No part of his conduct had, however, passed unobserved by his grandmother, who had received too severe a lesson in a former instance to permit any circumstance of this na-

ture to escape her notice: she therefore resolved to come to a decided explanation with Arthur upon the subject; not with any idea of influencing his mind, but rather with the view of setting her own at rest, as to the future intentions of the young man.

Both the Earl and Countess were now fast descending the vale of life; and it was their wish to see their grandson married, as soon, at all events, as he should attain a proper age. It was natural that, in the choice of a wife, their views should lean towards some young woman in a corresponding rank in life. But this was, in their liberal and enlightened minds, a secondary consideration, in comparison with Arthur's happiness; and they consequently determined to allow him to make his own selection. The Countess's suspicions of her grandson's attachment to Lucy were daily confirmed; and this had rendered her more anxious to strictly analyse the disposition of her young friend; and it was with the utmost satisfaction that the amiable lady perceived in Miss Delmore the blossoms of every essential quality which she could desire in a

daughter-in-law; and as her connexions on the mother's side were of the highest rank, even the objections of birth were in a measure done away with: fortune was of course a matter of no consideration:—in short, she resolved at once to ascertain the exact nature of Arthur's sentiments, and to communicate to him, with Lord Roxmere's approbation, their consent to his union with Lucy on his return from abroad.

Having obtained from Arthur a full confession of his feelings, Lady Roxmere thus addressed him: "You are yet a child in the ways of the world, of the most dangerous part of which you have hitherto seen nothing; you will meet with hundreds of young women, more beautiful, more fascinating, than Lucy; your rank, fortune, and prospects, will expose you to a thousand seductions, to which men of maturer age and the greatest sense have fallen victims; mothers of the highest rank will pay court to you; daughters will put forth a thousand arts to ensnare you—Lucy may be forgotten."

"Never, whilst I have life!" retorted Ar-

thur; "it is unkind of you to suppose me capable of such fickleness."

"It is very natural at your age, my dear, that you should think so," answered Lady Roxmere; "but still you may repent the loves of your childhood: you may see others whom you may prefer; your honour may, perhaps, forbid you to renounce her to whom you had engaged yourself in a moment of youthful confidence and enthusiasm; you will marry from obligation alone, and domestic misery will ensue. You will not be the first example of this nature amongst my acquaintance: there are those whom I could quote, whom a mistaken notion of honour have rendered miserable through life." With all the incredulity natural to his age and youthful love, Arthur now broke into the most enthusiastic declarations of his immovable constancy, and the most exaggerated encomiums of the perfections of his mistress. "I have not the slightest doubt," resumed the Countess, "that you think all you say, and have confidence in all you think; but, notwithstanding this, you must allow me to know a little more of human nature

than yourself; and I must still say, that it is possible your sentiments for Lucy may alter."

"Try me; put me to the most severe proofs of time and situation!" exclaimed Arthur.

"That is my intention," said Lady Roxmere. "In the first place, you must assure me, that you will not exact any promise from Lucy previous to your departure, nor enter into any engagement which your honour or hers may consider binding."

"That I will faithfully promise, if it is your positive wish," replied Arthur, with a look, however, of no great cordiality; "though, I suppose, you will not object to my writing to her, or telling her, before I go, that I have your consent to our union on my return."

"Most certainly I do object," answered the Countess; "that would be tantamount to an engagement. No: matters must remain as they are now; and, if you have any regard for Lucy or me, promise me that you will neither attempt to correspond, nor make any declaration of your attachment at present; on your return you shall be rewarded for your

forbearance." With a deep sigh, Arthur gave the required promise; adding, "You will write, at least, and tell me all about her: you will show her my letters; there can be no harm in that."—"Occasionally, I shall have no objection to assist you," rejoined the Countess; "but, in the mean time, I must sound her upon the subject. It is my intention, as soon as you quit us," and the good old lady's voice trembled at the thoughts of the separation—"it is my intention to invite Lucy to reside entirely with me. After introducing her to all the neighbourhood, I shall, for your sake, again re-enter the world, and present her in London; and I trust, my dear, on your return, that you will find her as well qualified to do honour to a coronet, as she is now fitted to confer happiness on a cottager."

It may be imagined with what feelings of gratitude and delight Arthur Beverley thanked his excellent relative for her goodness, and after such assurances that he willingly reiterated the promise she had exacted. Embracing the kind-hearted old lady with as much warmth and enthusiasm as if she had been the fair Lucy herself, he

hastened down to the Parsonage, to invite Delmore and his daughter to dine and sleep at the Castle; and having found Lucy alone, it was with difficulty he restrained himself from falling at her feet and declaring his passion; but Delmore's entrance fortunately saved him from a breach of promise.

Having communicated his grandmother's message, the young soldier proceeded down to Beverley Park, wishing, for the last time, to enjoy a sail in the bay in his uncle's yacht; and in a few minutes the gallant little vessel was standing out of the harbour; whilst Lucy and her father proceeded to the Castle, little aware of the honour and pleasures that were in store for them.

CHAPTER V.

WITH the exception of one or two revenue cruisers, it was a matter of rare occurrence for ships of war, or indeed vessels of any magnitude, to enter Beverley Bay, unless driven to seek shelter there during violent gales of wind. Its secluded situation, and the abrupt character of the greater portion of the coast, were equally unfavourable to smuggling: it was not often, therefore, that attempts had been made to run cargoes; though, in fact, this had occurred more than once on the eastern side of the river, which afforded greater facilities for the purpose both of landing and secreting the goods.

With that love of adventure and frolic natural to his age and enterprising disposition,

Arthur had looked upon these illegal proceedings as excellent sport. Whenever, during the absence of the revenue vessel, he had discovered a suspicious-looking sail in the offing, he hastened on board a small pleasure-boat, and sometimes contrived to approach the smuggler. More than once he had succeeded by this means, not only to obtain some foreign curiosities, then of greater value from the difficulty of procuring them, than from their intrinsic worth; but had also witnessed in secret the proceedings of these daring men, either in "cellaring," or "running their crop," as the operation of sinking the kegs for concealment beneath the waters, or landing them in safety, is technically termed by the smugglers.

From the prevalence of strong land-winds, the King's cutter, which usually kept her station in Beverley harbour, or cruised off the Foreland, had taken shelter in some other port; and Arthur rejoiced, when he rose in the morning in question, upon observing a strange sail beating about the eastern headland. She had all the trim and appearance of a free-trader of

a large class; and the hope of being able to board her, had been an additional motive for his wishing to sail.

It was now the month of March; the day was boisterous and squally; there was a heavy sea rolling in the bay, with every indication in the sky of an approaching tempest. Independent of the immediate object which Arthur had in view, this was precisely the weather in which he most delighted to go on board. The sight of the dark and voluminous clouds, as they chased each other across the firmament; the agitation of the ocean, when its angry billows were lashed into fury by the winds, suited his manly and daring character: it gave an appearance of greater enterprise to his excursion, and a greater degree of grandeur to the mighty element, than during a calm, when all was still and listless around, and when the drowsy sails flapped heavily against the masts and shrouds, without there being either life in the waters, or movement in the vessel.

Lord Roxmere's yacht, the Genet, was one of the largest and fastest sailing cutters of the

Club; she was armed and appointed in all respects like a King's vessel; and her crew was composed of some of the choicest hands in Beverley, under the command of an old Lieutenant in the Navy, who, from that want of interest and connexion, so often fatal to many of the most meritorious of this invaluable class of men, was left, at an advanced period of life, without a chance of promotion, but with a large family, and no other provision than his half-pay.

Dashing gallantly out of harbour, the Genet soon stretched across the bay, and rapidly made towards the stranger, who at first appeared to take no notice of their approach; but ere they neared her, within a couple of miles, she suddenly tacked, and made all sail away from them; and as the Genet showed her private signal, the former fired a gun, and hoisted a Dutch tri-colour.

Gladly would Arthur and the whole crew have pursued the foreigner, who they now determined must be a privateer; but, in despite of the pressing solicitations of the former, the

Lieutenant dared not take such a step without Lord Roxmere's permission. Having, therefore, stood on in the same direction as the stranger for some time, the yacht wore, and made for the harbour. In the mean while, the weather continued to lower, the swell increased, and there was every symptom of a decided gale. Black ponderous clouds, intersected here and there with sickly streaks of light, rose gloomily from the horizon; violent gusts and squalls came sweeping across the waters, their progress marked by their whipping up the foam in long curling eddies from a great distance, until they dashed against the vessel, casting her nearly on her beam-ends, and dipping her yard and mainsail in the passing surges.

The evening had already set in when the yacht came to her moorings, and as the ebb-tide had still an hour to run, Arthur directed his servant to follow with his gun and cloak, and took the short cut home across the sands, which were accessible between the town and castle at most times, save within an hour or two of high-water. Steps, also, were cut in

several of the most precipitous parts of the rugged cliffs, in order to facilitate the communication between the park and the shore; as well as to afford shelter to any of the inhabitants or fishermen who might be overtaken by the tide, which, from the nature of the sands and currents, raced towards the land with irresistible violence and rapidity.

No sooner had Delmore and Lucy reached the Castle, than Lady Roxmere communicated to them in the most friendly and affectionate terms her anxious wish that the latter should in future continue to reside entirely with her, not on the footing of a companion, but on that of a daughter: and it may be imagined that if this proposition was accepted with the utmost thankfulness by Lucy, how much greater must have been the surprise and joy of her father, when the Countess communicated to him the substance of her conversation with Arthur, and frankly declared her consent to the union of the young people, upon the conditions she had prescribed to her grandson.

Overwhelmed with the mingled sentiments of delight and gratitude, Delmore could make no other reply to the communications of his noble benefactress, than by uttering an exclamation of thanks to the Almighty, and pressing Lady Roxmere's hand between his own. Humble and unassuming as was his nature, his heart beat high with paternal pride at the brilliant prospect which appeared to dawn upon his beloved child, and he paid the tribute of weakness to human nature, by inwardly exulting at the thoughts of his poor Lucy being elevated to a position and rank in life, which might justly excite the envy of the richest and proudest of the land, independent of the happiness which a union with a young man of Arthur's excellent disposition and amiable temper so fully entitled him to anticipate.

Having readily entered into Lady Roxmere's plans, and promised the utmost secrecy upon the subject, even with his daughter, every thing was speedily arranged for Lucy's removal to the Castle as soon as Arthur departed, and these important points being settled, the happy

group awaited with impatience the return of the young soldier.

The day had already drawn to a close, and the party were assembled in the library, awaiting the announcement of the usual summons to dinner, when the *maître d'hôtel*, an old privileged Frenchman, who had been many years in the Earl's service, entered the room, and announced that Mr. Arthur was not yet returned. This, however, created no alarm, as the Earl had watched the entrance of his yacht into harbour, and concluded that his grandson had delayed a few minutes in order to bid adieu to some of his friends in the town. "Come, we will honour him this once, and wait half an hour," observed the Earl; "but if he is not more punctual when he joins his regiment," "Il perdra la soupe," observed Monsieur Parement.

"Worse than that, I fear," rejoined Lord Roxmere; "we shall hear of his being put in arrest."

"C'est juste, c'est très juste!" exclaimed the old man, who had remained fidgeting near the door; "*il y va de son honneur, de sa gloire, de sa vie même peut-être.*"

"Who? what do you mean, Parement?" demanded the Earl, staring.

"Ah, ah, milor," replied the other; "vat I mean? vy, you vaite von minute, bon! vous en êtes le maitre; vell, you vaite two minute, c'est bien encore; but, *morbleu!* ven you vaite tirty minute, you assassine de cook!"

"Why, what is the matter with Crouton?" demanded Lady Roxmere; "is he unwell?"

"O non, non, milady; il se porte comme le bœuf gras; but if I say you vaite, *pardi!* he die let on te tresser, you ruin his new plate, his superbe '*heurtade de cabillaud à la victime, il n'y a pas de cœur de grand artiste qui puisse y résister.* Ah, I remember, ven I vas *premier garçon aide chef chez le Prince de Condé*"—

"Well," replied the Earl, dreading the length of the story which he knew would ensue, "pray desire Crouton to put off the dinner for half an hour, and if Mr. Beverley does not return by that time, let dinner be served." Shaking his well-powdered *ailes de pigeon* curls, the maître d'hôtel muttered, as he quitted the

room, "*Comme il plaira à milor, mais ces Anglois sont des drôles, ils ne sçavent apprécier les sciences, ils ont cent boxeurs pour un seul cuisinier; ah Dieu! j'avois de grandes espérances de Monsieur Arthur, mais il n'y est pas de calcul à faire sur la morale des hommes, ventregris!* he lof his vaifes, and his vaters, he lof his gotdem colbeef, he care not for sauce. *Ah! ce ne sera jamais qu'un homme médiocre!*" in which opinion he was cordially joined by Mr. Crouton; who swore, that if it were not for the guillotine, and there being more cooks than stomachs left in *la belle France*, he would throw up his commission and return to Paris.

The half hour had nearly elapsed, when the party in the library were again disturbed by a considerable uproar in the adjacent gallery, and in a moment Parement, followed by several servants of the household, entered the room with looks of the utmost consternation. Before the Earl could demand the cause of this unusual scene, (and at first he really imagined that Crouton had followed the example of his illustrious predecessor Vatel,) Parement screamed forth, "*Ah, mon Dieu! mon Dieu! tout*

est perdu; ah, Monsieur Arthur, ce pauvre cher Mister Arthur, ah *la belle heurtade, tout est perdu, tout est gâté.*"

"Good God! what means this confusion? speak! explain?" demanded the Earl and Countess.

"Ah, bon Dieu! *ce cher enfant, ce cher Arthur, ce pauvre Crouton! tout est abimé.*" "Cease this jargon," exclaimed the Earl sternly, "and let some one explain." In a moment one of the other domestics stepped forward, and the cause of this uproar was made known: the scene of distress and alarm which ensued baffles all description; for the servant, who had been directed by Arthur to follow him, had arrived at the castle in a state of breathless terror, declaring that he had seen his young master knocked down by a party of armed men, who had carried him on board a large galley, which, as far as the light permitted him to see, appeared to steer her course towards the point where they had seen the foreign lugger.

Such was the stupefaction produced by this man's hasty and imperfect account, that some minutes elapsed ere any person thought of as-

certaining Arthur's real fate. On the one side, Lord Roxmere was occupied in supporting the Countess, who had fainted; on another, poor Lucy, who had entered with the servants, was in a state of distraction; all was amazement and consternation. Delmore alone preserved his presence of mind. Hastening to the stables, he mounted one of the fleetest horses, and having dispatched messengers in different directions along the coast, galloped down to the port, and quickly spread the painful intelligence amongst the inhabitants.

In despite of the violence of the gale, there was scarcely a seaman who did not hasten to the port, and in a few minutes a dozen vessels of the largest class were unmoored and under weigh, their enraged crews breathing vengeance. Amongst this number was the Genet, whose commander, having unwillingly abandoned the chase of the lugger in the forenoon, now took upon himself, at the suggestion of Mr. Delmore, to put to sea, the latter having declared his intention of accompanying him. With the practised eye of an old man-of-war's-man, Lieutenant Bower had counted the lugger's guns in

the morning, and calculated her hands, which he knew from experience were generally numerous on board the foreign privateers. A reinforcement to the small but resolute crew of the Genet was considered necessary; therefore, about thirty of the most determined were selected from the many volunteers who crowded the pier, and immediately the gallant vessel slipped from her moorings, and, greeted with the cheers of the population, was soon under weigh, with every stitch of canvass set which the violence of the wind would permit her to carry.

As the cutter stretched farther from the land, Mr. Delmore, who had attentively observed the motions and looks of Lieutenant Bower, was alarmed at seeing a considerable alteration in his countenance. That air of grim satisfaction which had marked his features at first, now gave way to an expression of anxiety, and even of suffering; and as each succeeding wave, or rather mountain of water rolled by the vessel, the seaman appeared to shake his head, and draw his breath with a kind of shudder, frequently conversing with the mate in a low voice. "It is, indeed, a tremendous night,"

said Mr. Delmore, clinging to the shroud, as the cutter rose over the waves, and, like a lion shaking the dew from its mane, cast from her bows and fore-rigging a cloud of spray. "You may indeed say so, Sir," rejoined Bower: "had it not been for Mr. Arthur, I would as soon have thought of risking the lives of these brave men in such a gale, as I would have jumped from the Vulture's Tower; there is no boat can live in this sea."—"Is there no chance, think you, of the galley having reached the lugger?" demanded Delmore. "Impossible! I think, Sir. Why, we even can scarcely keep our course, the wind has already veered to the north; if he is not safe aboard ere this—we go to avenge his death."—"Is there no possibility of their having landed? Surely," said Delmore, "they would not persist in sacrificing their own lives, they must have put to shore."—"Nothing but God's hand can have helped them, Sir. Why there 's no craft in Europe that could escape the 'Shark's-jaw,' with wind and flood dead on the reef; the current races in there like a whirlwind."—"God have mercy on him!" exclaimed the clergyman, burying his face in his hands,

while the lieutenant, raising his hat, added, "His will be done!" A broad stream of light, in the direction of the Castle, now shot up its glare into the heaven, and in a few seconds was answered by similar illuminations at different distances along the coast. "They have fired the beacon; the invasion signals are blazing!" exclaimed Bower; "if we do not get more sail on, the lubbers will be off, or some of the Channel cruizers will be before-hand with us." The flash of a gun, followed by its report at no great interval, now attracted their attention; and although the pitchy darkness prevented their seeing to any distance, yet it was evident the object of their search was still off the Eastern Ness. "That's her," exclaimed Bower, "we have got her safe between us and the shore."—"Steady! steady!" was the reply of the helmsman. "The gale abates—shake out a reef in the main-sail—hoist throat and pique halliards!" The lieutenant's orders were obeyed in an instant, and the cutter flew with additional speed, cutting through rather than rising over the surges. The wind, which had been variable and unsteady, again shifted two or

three points to the north. "Haul aft the main-sheet!—belay!—keep her to the wind." "Ay, ay, Sir," replied the man at the wheel, as he put the helm a starboard. The report of a second, and shortly of a third gun, still nearer than the first, came booming across the waters. Some light clouds which now arose upon the eastern horizon enlightened the atmosphere, and, to the joy of the cutter's people, showed the chase within a mile and a half under their lee-bow. Their approach seemed unobserved by the enemy, upon whom they rapidly advanced, as she lay heaving to and fro on the waves, with merely sufficient sail set to keep her steady. "Ram down another shot in the larboard-guns," exclaimed the lieutenant, "and every man to quarters: no firing until I give the word—one broadside, and then follow me, lads." The lugger now appeared to have descried them, for in a few seconds she put up her helm, made all sail before the wind, and commenced firing her stern-chasers. Her pursuers followed her example, judiciously keeping the wind. Every instant diminished the distance between the opponents, but the lug-

ger's commander quickly discovering that the superior sailing of the yacht precluded all chance of escape, suddenly hauled his wind, and awaited his enemy's approach. In less than three minutes the latter ran within half pistol-shot of the lugger's stern, poured in her fire with cool and deliberate aim as she passed, and then luffing up, closed, and fell on board of her adversary's starboard-quarter. In a moment the boarders, headed by Bower, sprang with irresistible impetuosity on the Dutchman's deck, where a most deadly and mortal struggle ensued.

Whilst the fierce conflict was waging on the foreigner's deck, the cutter, owing to the swell of the sea, burst from her lashings and shot ahead, leaving her boarders no resource save victory or death; by a masterly manœuvre, however, she was again tacked, and once more closing in her opponent's bow, again grappled, and again poured in her broadside. It was time she had performed this manœuvre;—the Dutchmen had, at first, been driven from their guns, and had lost many men; but as several of the Beverley people had also fallen, and the

greater portion of those who still fought were wounded, the foreigners gradually recovered their ground; and although the brave lieutenant and his handful of men could only be driven back inch by inch, yet at length, overpowered by numbers, they were compelled to retreat, leaving behind them several men, who had sprung down the after-hatchway in search of Arthur. The Dutchmen announced their success with a loud shout, and instantly cutting the lashings which bound them to the cutter, made all sail to escape.

Scarcely had Bower sufficient time to give the necessary orders for again preparing for action and pursuit; ere, indeed, he could wear and get weigh upon the Genet, he perceived the lugger suddenly haul down her sails, hoist a light, and fire a gun to leeward as a signal of distress; and as the cutter bore down towards her, it was evident that she had received some irreparable injury in her hull, that her rudder had been shot away, and that she was in a sinking state. The fury of the British crew was now softened into compassion; to cease every hostile measure, and to hasten to

the assistance of their former foe, was the only and immediate impulse of Bower and his crew. To launch a boat in such a sea as was then running was impossible; indeed, they had seen those of the foreigner, full of hands, swamped alongside her; all that remained was to run the Genet close alongside the lugger, to grapple her, if possible, and thus to afford the remainder a chance of jumping aboard. This daring and humane determination was, however, rendered abortive; for, as the Genet closed within an hundred yards of the foreigner, an enormous sea was seen to strike the stern of the latter, carrying away her bulwarks, clearing her deck from stem to stern, and sweeping several hands overboard. Ere she could recover from the effect of this shock, a second monstrous wave lifted her up on its mighty summit, and exposed for some seconds the whole depth of her dark hull; for awhile she balanced on its foaming crest, and then lurching, pitched head foremost into the gulf beneath,—a loud yell was heard above the roaring of the gale, for an instant her topmasts were visible, then all disappeared, and in one

moment more, the raging waves were curling and dancing over the spot, as if in mockery of the ill-fated vessel and her crew, which they had engulphed for ever.

By the extraordinary exertions of the Genet's people, half-a-dozen drowning wretches were rescued from the ocean; but the rest, together with many of the Beverley men, perished. After beating about the spot for an hour or two, the cutter made for the harbour, while Delmore and the Lieutenant were not merely penetrated with awe and affliction at the sudden and terrible catastrophe they had witnessed, by which so many of their own brave companions had perished, but were trembling with anxiety and uncertainty respecting the fate of Arthur.

CHAPTER VI.

ARTHUR had proceeded at full speed for some time along the sands, when on pausing to take breath ere he ascended one of the flights of steps cut in the rock, his attention was excited by the unusual appearance of a large eight-oared galley, which lay rocking on the billows at the distance of fifty yards from the surf. A sight so uncommon naturally created surprise, and he advanced a few paces round the projecting rocks to examine her, as well as he could, through the gloom; his imagination still recurring to the smugglers. Scarcely, however, had he remained a moment stationary, when two men rushed from beneath the cover of a broken crag, whilst two others,

whom he had not heard following him, in consequence of the roar of the elements, rapidly advanced, and closed upon him from behind, before he had time to fly, or think of defending himself.

To call for assistance, or to attempt self-defence was equally fruitless. The bellowing of the winds, and grinding of the waves on the shingles, rendered it impossible for his voice to be heard, even had succour been at hand, and he was completely unarmed by his assailants, who were all furnished with weapons; in fact, he was in a moment felled senseless to the ground by a blow from the butt-end of a pistol, and whilst in this state, one of the ruffians tore open his shirt, examined the mark on his chest, and made some observation to his comrades; his arms were then tightly pinioned, he was lifted from the ground and carried to the edge of the waves. A signal in the mean time was given to the galley, which immediately approached as close as possible to the shore. Dashing through the surf with their captive, the strangers cast him into the boat, into which they themselves sprang; and then hoisting their

sails, and giving way with their oars, in a few minutes they left the shore a considerable distance behind them.

Though naturally brave and intrepid to a fault, Beverley's sensations, anxiety, and alarm when he recovered his senses, and was aware of his situation, exceeded all description. To be torn from his home, from all the joys and comforts that awaited him there; to see the lights which glimmered from the Castle windows gradually waning from his eye, perhaps for ever; to think of his parents, of Lucy, and that he might never see them again; to be exposed, on a dark and tempestuous night, in an open boat, to an unknown and, probably, dreadful destiny, was in itself sufficient to have struck terror and despair into the breast of the bravest man; but in addition to this, he was fettered, deprived of the power of speech, or motion, his head throbbing with agony from the blow he had received, his limbs numbed, and his clothes drenched with water. In truth, such was the agony of his mind and body, that a tear of anguish moistened his eye, and he groaned with despair and pain as he lay shiver-

ing at the bottom of the boat. Every attempt which he had made to obtain an explanation from his captors had been treated with silent contempt, or replied to in the coarsest terms, and in the Dutch language; of which he was enabled to understand a few words from his knowledge of German. Seeing the utter inutility of attempting to induce the ruffians to take pity upon him, he had resigned himself for a length of time in silence to his fate: reckless almost of life, he hoped that the violence of the gale would either put an end to his misery, by capsizing the boat, or speedily bring them alongside the vessel to which he concluded they were steering.

The veil of darkness by which they were enveloped, as well as the position in which he lay, had prevented his observing the direction of the boat's head; but his situation at length became so irksome, he suffered such intolerable bodily pain from the cords, that he determined to make one more effort for permission to sit up, and in this he was fortunate enough to succeed. The man at the helm, after consulting with his associates, directed his arms to be set at liberty,

and he was permitted, after much debating, to place himself on one of the thawts, or seats, between two of the crew. The first use he made of this freedom was to examine their present situation attentively, and he quickly perceived, by the bearing of the lighthouse, that they had made little progress. He had been hitherto too much occupied with his own sufferings, his mind was too much bewildered to pay any attention to the operations of his captors, but he now remarked that the sails had been gradually hauled more aft, either in consequence of a change of wind, or alteration in their course, until at last even the gib and foresail began to shiver, and it was found necessary to hand them in altogether.

It was evident the wind had veered—a ray of hope shot across his breast; his heart began to beat with joy: the fury of the gale, the raging of the ocean was forgotten: it was impossible his captors could gain the open sea, they must make for land. The thought of again seeing his dear relations, Lucy, life, and freedom, again rose to his mind, and reanimated his drooping spirits; but these hopes

speedily vanished. He heard the villain at the helm deliberating with one of his comrades in a low voice, and he collected sufficient from their words to ascertain, that it was their intention to pull to shore, but that he was destined to be put to death. He plainly heard the words, "We shall lose our reward," replied to by "Dead or alive, those are my instructions."

Dreading to disclose this discovery of their horrible project, lest it should accelerate his fate, Arthur determined to await his doom with resignation, and to employ in prayer the short time which was permitted him to live. With his head bowed down, and his hands clasped, he continued for some time in fervent supplication to the Almighty. At length, as the galley rose out of the trough of the sea, and was balanced for a moment on the pinnacle of a mountainous wave, he plainly perceived, by the light of the beacon, that they had been carried considerably to the eastern side of the bay; and, in despite of the unceasing exertions of the crew, that they were fast drifting towards the dangerous ledge of rocks

which formed a bar to the entrance of a small creek, through which there was a narrow channel, barely capable of admitting a large fishing-boat at full tide.

If the unhappy Arthur felt convinced of the impossibility of his captors being able to carry him to sea, this afforded little consolation; nay, were they even to relinquish their murderous intentions, death, inevitable death for himself and them, did not appear less certain. Many were the melancholy tales current in Beverley of the loss of lives on these fatal rocks: no boat which had been drawn towards them had ever been known to escape. The fishermen shunned their vicinity in the calmest weather; the country people as they passed of an evening along the shore, looked upon the spot with superstitious awe. Dead lights were said to have been seen glimmering at low-water upon the rugged, muscle-covered points of the black ledge: in tranquil weather, music of a wild and mournful nature had been heard sighing above them; and often during gales of wind, the shrieks and screams, as it were of drowning men, had been wafted to the shore, though it was well known that

no vessel or boat could be near the spot. Even the mind of Arthur was not entirely free from these superstitions, and an additional sensation of awe thrilled through his veins, as the recollection of these popular sayings crept across his mind.

Every corner of the bay was known to him from his infancy, and the increasing stream of red light which illuminated the sky, plainly showed him the full danger of their situation: no boat could live much longer in such a sea—destruction hovered over them on every side. In defiance of the increasing exertions of the crew, the current wast fast driving them towards the reef; every instant they were sucked nearer, still nearer to the breakers. Arthur plainly saw that not a moment was to be lost. If the galley's head could be turned, there was a chance of her being carried through the narrow channel. Rising from his seat, he exclaimed to the man at the helm, who had spoken to him in broken English, "It is needless to pull against the flood—no power can resist it;—lay her head, if you can, on yon black clump of trees, it is the landmark to the

Channel: give way for your lives, or we are lost! a hand's-breadth to the right or left and we perish—it is the Shark's Jaw." This information, which appeared to be understood by several of the crew, increased their terror and confusion: "*Donder en bliksem*, hand the lad astern, *je verdoemd duivel's volk!* let him steer," said the ruffian, as, mechanically obeying Arthur's direction, he put up his helm, and desired his larboard oars to pull hard. "Come, quick, "*je vervloekte schoollummel!*" cried the fellow, addressing Arthur, "or I 'll heave you overboard." Slipping off his rough and heavy jacket, which was saturated with water, Arthur placed his foot on the bench before him as if to comply. Casting his eye, at the same moment, around, he saw they were already within the curl of the breakers: it was impossible the boat could wear, she must come broadside on the reef; no human strength or skill could now avail.

The fellow at the helm appeared equally aware of this, for, with fiendlike obduracy, he exclaimed, "*God zal, mÿ rollebollen!*" I know he swims like a fish; though we sink, he shall

not float; fasten him to the grapnel, and in with him." This order was given in Dutch, but Arthur caught the last words. A thought flashed across his mind; it was that of desperation, it could not have been inspired by hope. As the ruffians near him arose to execute the order of their commander, Arthur sprung from the side of the galley upon the bosom of an enormous wave, which came rolling like a mountain towards them, and was carried with the rapidity of lightning towards the reef. Young Beverley's skill as a swimmer has been already alluded to, but what mortal force or courage could avail against the fury of the ocean? The mighty wave bore him unharmed towards the land for nearly an hundred yards, and then rising up with awful grandeur and impetuosity, curled and burst in myriads of particles within a few feet of the "Shark's Jaw," overwhelming him in an abyss of foam, bruising him against the shingle, and ere he had time to recover his breath, or to regain his footing, he felt the receding eddies tearing him back with irresistible violence beneath their vortex.

His situation was awful beyond all descrip-

tion: his ears rattled and tingled with strange confused sounds of drums, bells, and music; an acute throbbing pain shot across his brain; his eyes seemed filled with liquid fire; blood appeared to burst from his nostrils; flashes of lightning darted before him; the whole contents of his veins were rushing and burning in his head; a choking, gulping suffocation checked his respiration and oppressed his chest. Horrible situation! he had sense enough left to feel acutely all its agony; but he had neither hope nor strength to avoid his destiny: "Merciful God, have pity on me!" was all he could utter to himself, as he made one more desperate effort to rise to the surface: he heard the raging breakers boiling and lashing over his head; whilst the deafening din of the rolling shingle grated harshly beneath him.

A second wave, more tremendous than the first, now caught him, as he convulsively struggled amidst the foam, and bore him upwards. A shout, a shriek, as of human voices, struck upon his drowning senses—he fancied that he felt the pressure of a human body—it grasped at,—it caught him—he struggled violently to

disengage himself in vain—it drew him under: he could distinguish no more—there was a violent rattling in his throat—his senses fled.

Impressed with the idea that the beacon-fires, which blazed from the summit of the Vulture's Tower, and neighbouring hills, were signals of the threatened invasion having taken place, the volunteers and yeomanry of the surrounding villages hastily flew to arms, and assembled at their respective alarm-posts, whence they proceeded to the place of general rendezvous near Beverley. The nearest road from the eastern part of the coast to the Castle, entered one of the gates of the park, then crossed the creek at the back of the Shark's Jaw reef, by a long narrow horse-bridge, whence it ran for some distance contiguous to the sea, ere it joined the noble avenue conducting directly to the Castle. The leading file of a squadron of yeomanry having led their horses across the bridge, halted on the other side, to give time to their comrades to close up, upon a spot from which there was a full view of the tremendous reef, rendered still more distinct by the beacon-flames, which

were borne in that direction by the winds. Some of the foremost troopers, on drawing up on this spot, imagined they descried a boat outside the ledge, and heard the sounds of human voices; but the supernatural stories narrated of the Shark's Jaw recurred to their minds, and some of the most incredulous touched the elbows of their comrades, whispering, "I would not have believed it, if I had not seen it with my own eyes." This sight also attracted the observation of the officers, who, though not altogether without some respect for the popular superstition, galloped towards a small knoll, which commanded a better view of the reef.

Hence they distinctly observed a large boat drifting directly on the rocks; they saw her borne upwards for a few seconds on the foaming apex of a huge breaker; awhile she vanished, engulphed amidst the boiling surges: a loud—piercing yell fell upon their ears—again she re-appeared, and her black outline was partly visible; there was a second shriek, fainter than the first, and in an instant she was hurled bottom upwards against the rocks,

torn to a thousand fragments, and buried beneath the raging chaos of waters.

This could be no illusion—she must be one of the French gun-boats. Galloping back to the squadron, the commander ordered a few men dismounted to follow him, to the edge of the surf; where an immense sea, which burst almost at their feet, cast the bodies of two men upon the beach, and before the retiring waves could again draw them back, some of the yeomen rushed into the water, secured and carried them to land. Judge, reader, of the astonishment of the by-standers, when they discovered in one of these the inanimate body of the young heir of Beverley, fast locked in the gripe of an athletic man, who, though his forehead was dreadfully fractured by a fragment of rock, which was firmly wedged in his skull, had not relinquished his hold of Arthur, even in the very agonies of death.

The squadron was, fortunately, accompanied by its medical officers, who instantly examined the bodies; and, to the joy of the whole, declared that some faint symptoms of life were perceptible in that of Mr. Beverley. No time

was to be lost in applying the necessary remedies : one of the best-mounted farmers was immediately selected, the body of Arthur was placed before him, and he was directed to gallop, as fast as possible, to the Castle, escorted by the surgeon and several troopers. It would be difficult to express the mixed sensations of terror, surprise, and anxiety, which pervaded the hearts of the inmates of Beverley Castle, upon the arrival of the yeomen with Arthur's body; but these painful sentiments soon gave way to those of rejoicing, when it was announced, in the course of half an hour, that he had been restored to animation, and had recognised and spoken to his terrified relatives, who hung round his couch during the operations of the medical men in all the agony of suspense. Although he had received several contusions, no bones were fractured and there was every hope that a few days would suffice to efface every vestige of the terrible sufferings he had undergone. Such was the agreeable intelligence which greeted Mr. Delmore and his gallant companions when the Genet ran alongside the pier of Beverley, and in

a short time the whole party were once more safely united beneath the roof of the Castle.

Of the crew of the galley not one man escaped; a few fragments of oars and spars alone were cast ashore near the Shark's Jaw; the remainder, with the bodies of the sufferers, was carried by the currents far to the East. From the captives rescued from the sunken lugger, who were all common seamen, and, as it turned out, smugglers, intimately acquainted with the coast, little information could be obtained; though sufficient was collected from them to create the strongest suspicion that Jules Mainforte was the original projector of the desperate outrage. According to the account of the prisoners, their vessel was "De See-rover," of Flushing. Hans Stoorm, master, ten guns and eighty men. She had run over in order to seize an emigré, who, as they understood, was to be delivered to the Marine Prefect, at Antwerp, who had been on board the vessel shortly before she sailed from the Scheldt. The name of the Prefect was said to be the Baron d'Arville, one of Napoleon's newly-created nobility; nor was it until some time subsequent that Lord Roxmere dis-

covered that this person was, in fact, Jules Mainforte himself, who, having escaped the dangers of the Revolution, had secured possession of the whole of the D'Avrancourt property, and was in considerable favour with the French Emperor.

As had been predicted, a few days sufficed to restore Arthur to complete convalescence, and ere a month elapsed, he felt sufficiently recovered to bid adieu to home. He had postponed taking leave of the Delmores until the last moment, and as the Parsonage was contiguous to the London road, he directed the postilion to stop at the gate, and entered the house.

Nature, who not only developes herself with great precocity in the physical formation of the fair sex, but endows their minds, at an early age, with a degree of acuteness and sensibility (in every thing connected with the finer passions) rarely to be met with in man until he has attained a more advanced period of life, had not evinced her wonted activity in enlightening the mind of the artless Lucy. If, however, she had been unconscious of the real

nature of her attachment to Arthur up to the period of the catastrophe, which so nearly deprived him of life; if she had hitherto mistaken her sentiments for those of friendship and sisterly love; that event, combined with the thoughts of his departure, suddenly and completely opened her eyes to the whole truth. She awoke, as it were, from a dream, and in a moment a thousand conflicting and painful emotions superseded the peaceful and calm sensations which she had so long cherished without mistrust. With that feeling of purity and delicacy, which is the inherent attribute of women, (until their minds are corrupted, or their morals contaminated by the heartless precepts of what is called the great world,) poor Lucy trembled lest she should have betrayed her affections either to Arthur or his parent; her heart sickened with fear, lest in some moment of unguarded confidence or innocent freedom, she might unconsciously have said or done any thing which could bear the construction of indelicacy or presumption in the eyes of the Roxmeres, or in those of the man she loved; for their good opinion, and the

approbation of her own conscience, were as dear to her as Arthur's love. Ignorant of her own beauty and merit, but fully aware of her father's poverty and her own complete dependence, as well as the immense interval which separated the destitute daughter of a poor curate, from the heir to one of the richest and most noble houses in England, Lucy knew that it was madness to think of a union with Mr. Beverley, even should their sentiments be mutual; but though she was convinced of this, she felt at the same time how utterly impossible it was for her to conquer an attachment, which had been interwoven with her existence from the earliest days of her childhood. It was a duty, however, which she owed her parent and herself, to place the strictest control over her looks and behaviour, and to conceal from every eye the secret which she had thus tardily discovered. This determination produced, as may be supposed, a total revolution in her manner towards Beverley, during the remainder of his stay in that neighbourhood; the gaiety and frankness of her behaviour gave way to a reserve and coldness, which, however

annoying to Arthur, was ten times more agonizing to herself. She became absent, confused, and embarrassed; and inasmuch as she had formerly awaited his approach with anxiety, and eagerly advanced to meet him, in all the candour of innocent sincerity, she now shunned his presence, and dreaded his appearance; she wished him away, but the thought of his departure was misery; she sought to conceal her emotion, but the blush which mantled her cheek when his name was mentioned, and the tear which dimmed her eye when his journey was alluded to, sufficiently betrayed all that was passing in her mind. Her efforts were those of a virtuous and well-regulated mind struggling to achieve a painful duty; but the merit of the action neither diminished the difficulty nor the pain. They alone can duly appreciate Miss Delmore's conduct, who have themselves sacrificed the fondest affections of their early years; who have renounced those cherished dreams of love, hope, and expectation, which have grown with their growth, and ripened with their maturity, in obedience to the cold precepts of reason, or the formal dic-

tates of worldly prudence. It is a sacrifice which may be accomplished, but the seared heart and blighted affections rarely recover their wonted tone.

As utterly unacquainted with human nature, as he was ignorant of the delicate texture of woman's heart, Arthur attributed this alteration in Lucy to any thing rather than its true cause: he was piqued and mortified to the utmost; so much so, that even had he not been restricted by his solemn promise to Lady Roxmere, he had too much pride to enter into any explanation, and he was too much irritated, or, perhaps, too much in love, and, above all things, too young, to reason calmly with himself on the subject; and with a degree of injustice not uncommon in man, a kind of coolness and formality, strongly contrasted with his previous candid and easy manner, had imperceptibly grown upon him, and left him still less right to complain of the conduct of Lucy.

Thus, when the moment of separation took place, (being still under the influence of pique and mortification,) he assumed a levity and indifference of manner foreign to his nature, and

at direct variance with his real feelings; he talked in rapture of the pleasures he anticipated on joining his regiment, and affected to dwell upon the little regret he should have felt at quitting home, had it not been for his relatives, and "that beautiful creature, Camilla Grantham;" and then, after a few trifling remarks, he formally shook the hand of poor Lucy, who stood with a bursting heart before him, and uttering a cold "good-by, Miss Delmore," threw himself into the carriage, and was out of sight in a moment.

No sooner had he quitted the apartment—ere Mr. Delmore indeed (who was much agitated himself) could utter a word—than Lucy, unable any longer to control the bitterness of her emotion, threw herself into her parent's arms, and as the fond father pressed his virtuous child to his heart, she at once made a confession of her sentiments, and avowed her attachment. Restricted by his promise to the Countess, Delmore could offer little other consolation than his unfeigned and affectionate approbation of her candour and conduct; his sympathy at her distress, and his fervent hope

that her good sense, and the absence of the object of her affections, would again restore her innocent mind to its former calm. Delmore knew enough of human nature to be aware of the inutility of discussing a subject of this nature, such discussion serving but to add fuel to the flame one wishes to extinguish, and he therefore conducted his daughter to her chamber, and repeatedly and tenderly embracing her, proceeded to the Castle, where he communicated to his noble friend all that had passed during the morning.

CHAPTER VII.

Miss Grantham, the young lady mentioned in the last chapter, was the daughter of a Mr. and Lady Bertha Grantham, whose residence and estates were contiguous to Beverley Castle, and who were the Earl's most immediate neighbours. The father of Mr. Grantham had amassed a splendid fortune in business, being one of the first individuals who had adopted to any great extent the inventions and improvements of the great Sir Richard Arkwright. His eldest son, the present squire, had commenced the world as clerk in the banking-house, of which he was destined in due time to become principal proprietor. He was one of the first, and probably the model of that class of commercial coxcombs who now not only

inundate London, but most of our great trading cities. The only advantage possessed by the Metropolitans over their provincial brethren being, that the first, by attempting to ape the manners of the fashionable world, merely become ludicrous; whilst the others, from copying the wilder classes of young country gentlemen—by attending pugilistic exhibitions, talking slang, dressing like coachmen, and abandoning the commercial almanack, and the study of tare and tret, for the Racing Calendar and the calculation of odds—render themselves both contemptible and disgusting.

The great ambition of Mr. Grantham's early life had been to ennoble the blood of his own family, by grafting upon it the scion of some aristocratic house. The joys of creeping into the higher circles, through the medium, and under the shadow of a Lady something Grantham, was the aerial castle to which he longed to add a solid foundation. He rubbed his hands, poked the fire with ecstasy, and pulled his shirt-collar over his ears, chuckling with inward delight at the splendid thought of seeing his name coupled with that of a Peer's

daughter, in some select paragraph of "marriage in high life;" instead of being announced in the corner of a paper, with all the common herd of Irish adventurers at Cheltenham, conveyancers in Bloomsbury, or Native Infantry at Calcutta. He dreamed of the glory of his wife taking precedence of all the every-day Baronets, or Knights' ladies, and Squires "Mesdames," at balls, operas, and dinners; he practised bowing before a looking-glass, and kissing hands to his own glove stuck on the elbow of a chair, upon the occasion of being presented "at Court on his marriage," by his father-in-law, Lord ———.

After a series of rebuffs and rejections, which might have discouraged a less enterprising man, fortune at length smiled upon his exertions. Being seated one morning in his private-room at the banking-house, ruminating on his favourite speculation, a nobleman was announced, whose accounts were kept in his ledgers, and to whose daughter he had paid as much attention as either her pride, or the haughty forbidding dignity of the father would allow. An unfortunate combination of false starts at New-

market, and ill luck at Watiers and the Union, was the cause of the Peer's visit to his banker; where he had not been in person since an occasion of much less magnitude and urgency had brought him on a similar errand to Mr. Grantham's father. Upon entering the banker's sanctum, Lord Sommerton was struck with the metamorphosis it had undergone since his last visit. The homely unaffected high desk, begrimed with the ink of millions, had given way to a smart French writing-table of polished mahogany, ornamented with ormolu mouldings. The small windows were replaced by large sashes filled with French plate-glass. The worthy business-like stools, with their black horse-hair cushions, had yielded to a set of pert green-leather fauteuils to match the table. A buhl clock stood upon an elaborately-carved marble chimney-piece. A couple of splendid Parisian cabinets, with their tiers of carton drawers, engraved with gilt letters, occupied the end of the room, looking more like the receptacles for lace and artificial-flowers of a milliner, than the reservoirs for acceptances, bills, and commercial correspondences of a banker.

A splendid library-table, loaded with newspapers and reviews, stood in the centre of the apartment, on which burnt a bronze lamp in the form of an antique patera. Three or four splendid engravings adorned the walls, intermixed with architectural elevations of the banker's country mansion, and the ground plan of his estates.

" I never saw anything done with more consummate taste!" exclaimed Lord Sommerton, as he entered the apartment, with an air of affected admiration; " this is really combining the unities of comfort, utility, and elegance."

" Neat, plain, quite *sans prétension;* display does not suit *les hommes d'affaires,*" replied Mr. Grantham, offering a chair to his noble visitor.

" Egad!" continued the latter, " it's the best thing I ever saw—I will have a room fitted up like this at Sommerton, for my steward;" and then recollecting the object of his visit, he recovered himself by adding, " for my steward and people to see me on business."

" I know that I am quizzed in the city," rejoined the banker, " for having converted my

father's old dismal den into a boudoir; but you are aware, my Lord, what Goths these people are, *ce sont des barbares;*" and he rolled the final R in his mouth as though he had been balancing a gargle in his trachea; "But I see no reason," continued he, "because our forefathers were very dirty people, that we should submit to all the filth of a century, when a few hundreds give the thing quite a different *tournure*, or, at least, an air of *propreté*," and he again rattled the poor R, flattering himself he had caught the exact Parisian accent, or manner of *grass-haying*, as he called it.

"Nothing can be more just," returned the nobleman, determined to humour his man; "we ought in all things to follow the progress of the age, or, as you would say, *la marche des lumières;* and in the latter you have succeeded admirably; for when last I called on that excellent man, my friend, your father, I broke my shins in crossing the room, and we were obliged to have candles to see each other before noon in the dog-days."

"Yes, indeed, it is necessary to do something, for my friends from the other end were

afraid to visit me; however, because I have shown a little taste, the people here are jealous, but more so, *entre nous*, because they see my name in the list of fashionable parties and dinners."

"Apropos of dinners, my good friend," replied the Peer, "you often promised to dine with me some day, but never kept your word; come, will you give me that pleasure on Saturday? Bertha thinks you have cut her." This was a gratuitous accusation on the part of his Lordship, who certainly told Grantham, that he hoped to see him "some day," but carefully avoided fixing the time; whilst his daughter, Lady Bertha, had declared to her parent, that she never would dine down-stairs, if the man with the mark of the pen behind his ear was invited. Though somewhat astonished at the charge of a breach of promise, which he never had the option of fulfilling, Grantham answered, "*Vous êtes trop bon*, but let me see; Saturday the twentieth. Egad! *je suis au désespoir*—I fear I'm engaged."

"By George! I am always unfortunate! I

am persecuted with ill-luck; Bertha will be quite unhappy," returned Lord Sommerton, delighted at being so easily rid of the bore of his good friend's company.

"Saturday the twentieth!" exclaimed Mr. Grantham, still examining his pocket-book, "*ah je me suis trompé*, my engagement is for the twenty-seventh, therefore I shall be most happy to accept your invitation. I did say, I would dine with a City friend, but I can put him off; he will keep, like 'a bad bill.'"

"For heaven's sake!" answered the Peer, "do not be uncivil to any of your friends out of kindness to me, you can dine with us any day, we shall always be glad to see you." Mr. Grantham now strenuously endeavoured to prove that he was disengaged, as he had before affected the reverse, and having settled this point, much to the dissatisfaction of his noble acquaintance, he added, "Are you aware, my Lord, that I am thinking of retiring altogether from business?"

"I think you are quite right," replied the Peer; "you are really lost to the world."

"I shall probably wind up my accounts at Christmas," answered Grantham; "and as they say at Paris, *je retirerai mon épingle du jeu.*"

"I wish to God I had done so!" exclaimed Lord Sommerton, "I should then be thirty-thousand pounds richer. Apropos du jeu; my dear Grantham, I have been, once in my life, fortunate enough to find you disengaged, I trust it is a favourable omen for the success of the trifling favour I have to ask." Mr. Grantham, who, though weak, vain, and silly, on many points, was most feelingly awake upon every subject connected with his own interest, saw in a moment that the Peer wanted to borrow money, and he determined to take advantage of this circumstance to forward his own speculations. Concealing his suspicions, he replied, "Any favour which you have to ask, I shall be most happy to grant, if within my power."

"Oh, it is a mere trifle," said the Earl, "a flea bite; the fact is, I am out about thirty-thousand, and I must raise the money instantly. Give me your advice how to proceed." Grantham knew that "advice" meant, in plain English, "lend me the sum;" he also knew the

exact state of the Peer's affairs; and that his property, closely entailed and loaded with mortgages, presented great difficulty to his raising money, at all events, within sufficient time to meet any pressing engagements. After a moment's consideration, he answered: "Thirty thousand is a large sum, in the present dearth of money; you will, I fear, find some difficulty in procuring it; besides, my Lord, you must be aware that the nature of your property presents great impediments."

"For Heaven's sake, do not talk to me of the cursed impediments!" retorted the Earl; "were they tenfold, they must be overcome—my character, my honour is at stake."

"The obstacles are not, perhaps, insurmountable," said Grantham, after some consideration; "but the delay through the usual channels must be great."

"Delay!" exclaimed the other—"it must be done forthwith, before Monday, or it will be too late."

"Oh! that is utterly impossible," answered the other; and then pausing, he added, "I am certain that in so short a period you could not

get the money, but—on certain conditions I will advance the sum."

"Will you?" exclaimed the nobleman, his countenance lighting up with joy. "My dear Grantham, how can I express my gratitude? For God's sake, let me have the money before ten on Monday; and, in the mean time, exact what conditions you please—take any interest—cut all the timber you can find; and as for securities—"

"I require nothing but personal security, my Lord," said Grantham, interrupting him.

"Mention it, my liberal friend," returned the Earl; "and if I have any influence with the persons, you shall have it."

"I merely require that of one individual," answered the banker, "over whom, I conclude, you must have immediate control."

"This is, indeed, a most generous and delicate mode of proceeding," replied Lord Sommerton, cordially shaking Grantham by the hand. "It enhances the value of your kindness. Mention the name, and I will hasten to obtain his co-operation."

Summoning all his courage, and confiding

in the exigency of the Peer's situation, Grantham answered, "I am rich, my Lord—"

"In generosity and liberality, as you are in wealth," replied the Earl, really touched by the apparent disinterestedness of the citizen. Mr. Grantham bowed and proceeded: "I have more money than I know what to do with."

"Can you make a more noble use of it than in assisting your friends," observed the Peer, "or assist them in a manner more delicate?" The other again bowed and resumed: "I stated my intention of retiring from business; it is my desire to do so forthwith, and to—marry:—my estates are large; I can make powerful settlements."

"Ah! what in love!" exclaimed Lord Sommerton. "Well, if my influence can aid in obtaining the object of your choice, command me; though, as matters now stand in the world, I should think that a man who unites the manners and exterior of a gentleman, with the weighty advantages of a brilliant fortune, need fear no opposition either from fathers or daughters, let their rank be what it will. Egad! my dear Sir, she may consider herself lucky, who-

ever she is. But tell me the name, and I will proceed directly."

"Your Lordship need not quit this apartment,—it can be done without your moving hence," said Grantham.

"Ah! what! some friend of mine? Shall I write? Here, give me pen and paper, and I will act as your ambassador. But first let us settle the money-business, and then I am at the service of your love."

"The one depends on the other," returned Grantham; and then, after walking once or twice up and down the room, he boldly added, "I am a plain-spoken man, my Lord; the person to whom I allude is your Lordship's daughter, Lady Bertha."

"My daughter!" said the Peer, starting and staring as if a powder-magazine had exploded at his feet.

"Yes, my Lord," answered the other: "in your own hands is the power of immediately obtaining the sum you require, even this very day; and your daughter's hand is the only security I require in exchange."

Lord Sommerton felt thunderstruck at an

explanation which he had little anticipated: he paused, stared, drew himself up, and was on the point of putting on his hat, and turning his back on his liberal friend. It was with difficulty that he could restrain his indignation at this cool, business-like proposal; and he cursed himself inwardly for being for a moment taken in, and for having lavished a string of compliments which were now turned against himself. But he heard the jingling of the gold which Mr. Grantham's cashier was trowelling out of a drawer in the adjoining office; he recollected the demands of honour that required immediate settlement, as well as his own absolute incapacity to meet his engagements without Grantham's assistance: the terrible word "defaulter" rung in his ears; and with an inward groan, he determined to listen to a proposition which, under any other circumstances, he would have resented as an insult. At length, after a long pause, during which he endeavoured to suppress his agitation, he said coldly, "You do me much honour, Sir; but you must excuse my surprise, this drawing upon me at sight has been rather unexpected."

Grantham, who saw the Peer's mental embarrassment as plainly as he was aware of his pecuniary difficulty, boldly replied: "It is, of course, entirely in your Lordship's power to accept or not; but you will do well to consider before you protest. You say, you require the money on Monday; I will give you until Sunday evening to consider. A favourable answer, and before ten on the following morning the sum is yours without interest or security. I am rich; I love your daughter; I can afford to pay fifteen hundred a-year for so great a prize. If, however, you decline conferring upon me the honour of becoming your son-in-law," (Lord Sommerton felt almost sick at the thoughts, but restrained his feelings;) "if you reject my proposition, you cannot reasonably expect that I should make the sacrifice of so large a sum, without such securities as are not, I fear, in your Lordship's power to advance. In a word, you are the best judge how far your necessities are urgent. This sum I have placed aside, for the purpose of attaining the object of my wishes. A word, and both your debts and my ambition are satisfied."

With the feeling of a man who has no alternative between the choice of two evils, Lord Sommerton at length answered: "You must be convinced, my dear Sir, that I cannot but feel highly flattered at a proposition which is so complimentary to my daughter. I have no other object in view but her happiness: I will, therefore, consult her; and if she does not positively object, I shall not offer any obstacle. Your fortune promises—"

"The enjoyment of every pleasure that the most *exigeante* wife can desire," interposed Grantham.

"Let us, for the present, say no more on the subject," returned the Peer; "I must immediately return home to communicate with my daughter; on Sunday you shall have our reply."

Concealing the mortification he felt at being driven into an alliance of this nature, the Earl bade adieu to Grantham, and employed the remainder of the day in running from one money-lender to another, in the hope of being able to avoid this marriage, by procuring the sum required, but in vain; and he was at

length obliged to make known to his daughter the banker's proposition. No great argument was, however, required, to obtain her consent. Lady Bertha's expectations of marriage had long ceased to be sanguine: she was already fast approaching the ticklish age of twenty-eight; for during ten successive seasons she had danced, frowned, smiled, and coquetted in vain. Every year, she had seen the fair flowers by whom she was surrounded culled, one by one, from their parental stems, and either continuing to shine in the gay world amongst its leaders and patronesses, or disappearing altogether, to perform the humbler yet more happy duties of domestic life. To be married when she had almost abandoned all hope, was something; but to marry an immensely rich fool, was an advantage not to be rejected; and she consoled herself for the vulgarity and want of family of her future husband, with the thoughts of the magnificent cachemeres, splendid jewels, rich dresses and equipages which she should have at her disposal, and, above all, with the determination of keeping her future

lord in the most consummate state of slavery and dependence.

Every method of raising money having failed, Lord Sommerton sent for his banker before the appointed evening, and presented him to Lady Bertha as her husband; the money was paid on the following day, and Mr. Grantham had soon the delight of seeing his visions of glory realized, by reading a leading column of the Morning Post, occupied with the account of his marriage, his wife's beauty, his wealth, his father-in-law's ancient family, and a long list of all the noble connexions and blushing bride-maids who attended the happy couple to the altar; not one of his own relations, *par parenthèse*, being allowed to make their appearance.

CHAPTER VIII.

LADY BERTHA GRANTHAM, a woman of considerable talent, but cold-hearted, proud, and worldly to an excess, had early obtained complete control over her husband, and ruled him and the rest of her family with undisputed despotism. Though contemptuous and overbearing with her inferiors, yet, when it suited her purpose, she could become one of the most fascinating and agreeable persons in London. He who saw her at Carlton House, or at the Duke of Devonshire's, smiling, affable, and brilliant, would scarcely have recognised the haughty and forbidding dame, whom he might have previously observed awing a whole population at a provincial race-ball, or freezing an otherwise merry party, at the house of some

country squire. To the advantages of an excellent education, she added much tact and finesse, an admirable spirit of observation, and consummate knowledge of the secret springs which influence human nature, and, above all, of that portion which forms the first, or fashionable society in London. The fruits of her union with Mr. Grantham had been several children, of whom a son, still a child, and two daughters, only remained alive; and the great object of her ambition was to establish the girls in such a manner as might console her for the *mésalliance* which she herself had contracted; and, with this view, it was the study of her life to impart to her children those heartless precepts which had been her own guide through life, and, if possible, to eradicate from their hearts every trace of the finer sensibilities implanted in them by nature.

The two Miss Granthams, at the time of Arthur's departure, were in their sixteenth and seventeenth years; were girls of great personal charms, but differing as much from each other in physical, as they did in moral qualifications. The eldest, Camilla, was the counterpart of her

mother in mind and person, and consequently her favourite. She was tall, and beautifully proportioned; which advantages of figure she did the utmost to neutralize by the affectation and study of her movements. Her eyes were dark, with an expression indicating more brilliancy than feeling, and more quickness of mind than sensibility of heart. Her features were regular and graceful, and her mouth beautifully small; but her smile was that of self-content and disdain, rather than of mirth and innocence. At an early age, she had been taught by her mother to know the full value of her charms; and the maternal lessons were not thrown away upon her. Though endowed with admirable natural talents, she affected an air of *naïveté*, amounting almost to folly; for she was constantly told by Lady Bertha, that a display of superior sense and information in a woman, was more calculated to estrange than attract the generality of men; and that it was better to affect ignorance, nay, even folly, than to show learning or superiority of intellect. The one, being mistaken for innocence and *naïveté*, charms the many; whilst the other, being attri-

buted to pedantry and self-love, pleases but few, and serves but to create envy and enmity. "For one well-informed, sensible man, capable of appreciating real merit in our sex," said Lady Bertha, "there are a thousand fools who are frightened at a woman if she do but possess common sense; the latter, my dear, always make the most useful husbands, and you will guide your act accordingly." This was her Ladyship's advice to Camilla, who was nowise backward in acting up to her mother's precepts. It was impossible to enter a room without being struck by Camilla's person; and to judge by the number of her admirers and her mamma's theory, there certainly were more fools than wise men in society.

The second girl, Fanny, was the reverse of her sister. Her height was beneath the common standard; but her figure was, if possible, still more exquisitely moulded: her brilliant blue eyes were fringed with long dark lashes, and shaded by finely pencilled brows of the same colour. Her hair was, however, light, but peculiar for its polish and luxuriance. Her countenance was animated with an

expression of unaffected simplicity, tenderness, and feeling; her movements were natural, and consequently graceful; yet she appeared unconscious of her charms; and having been told from her infancy that her elder sister was a model of perfection, she undervalued herself and all those who differed from that standard.

From the earliest age of the respective children, Lady Bertha had speculated upon the union of her favourite daughter with the young heir of Beverley; and the little Camilla was taught to consider the grey turrets of the Castle, as they peered above the distant trees, as her future property.

Her Ladyship proceeded to bring her plans to maturity by a system which proved that she was equally well acquainted with human nature, as with the practice of dissimulation. Her first care was to conceal her views from the Roxmeres, as well as her own husband; for although she always studiously courted and flattered the former, she nevertheless feared and inwardly disliked them; and as for the latter, it was completely against her system ever to permit him the slightest participation

in her confidence. Her next step was not only to keep Arthur himself in ignorance of her speculation, but to prevent him from seeing much of the person who, she hoped, would become his wife. She considered the system of throwing young people constantly into each other's society from infancy, as the worst possible method of insuring an object of this nature; early familiarity and constant contact often degenerating into a mere matter of careless habit, instead of suddenly bursting forth in all the ardour of that passion, which it was her hope would be awakened in the bosom of young Beverley. From being accustomed to see each other daily, and without restraint, the charms of novelty, the excitement of opposition, jealousy, and suspense, which so often arouse the dormant passions, and add the strongest stimulus to the affections, are not called into action. There exists neither doubt, fear, nor uncertainty, to enliven the flame, if already ignited; nor sudden impulse and sympathy to call it into life, if not previously in existence. All proceeds with the same calm tranquillity as in the natural affections between brother and sister. Taught to consider each other as un-

opposed, and predestined objects of attainment; to be united at a given period of reciprocal maturity, having no other barrier between them than time; their sentiments, generated in family or worldly convenience and juvenile habit, either remain for ever at a low temperature, or eventually dwindle into complete indifference, —nay, often into positive antipathy: and to avoid a union dictated by others, or, at all events, by duty, the youth not unfrequently runs off with a farmer's daughter, or something worse; whilst the young lady simultaneously elopes with a recruiting officer, or one of her father's footmen.

More than one speculation of this nature had been defeated by a similar *denouément* within the scope of Lady Bertha's acquaintance; and she therefore rarely permitted Camilla to appear when Arthur visited the Grange; whilst Fanny was brought forward, and what her mother called "made common." Her Ladyship carried her dissimulation so far, as even to evince less kindness to the former than to the latter in the presence of Arthur and his family. She hoped thereby to create a senti-

ment of pity and interest in the bosom of her intended prize, well knowing that every generous mind is inclined to sympathize with those who are unreasonably oppressed or ill-treated by their parents, more especially when the person combines the advantages of youth, beauty, and innocence. This plan succeeded so far, that Arthur often expressed himself warmly on the subject to his grandmother, who was in fact as much mystified as himself; and of the two girls, Camilla became the greater favourite at the Castle.

This deeply laid plot was carried on with consummate constancy until nearly the last day of Arthur's residence in the neighbourhood. He was too young at present for an open attack; and since he was on the point of going abroad, there could be no danger of his being carried off by any other person. Lady Bertha, therefore, determined to reserve her efforts for his return; contenting herself with carefully scrutinizing the effect of Camilla's charms on the young soldier at their last interview.

Upon this occasion, the watchful mother observed with satisfaction that Arthur showed

much emotion upon taking leave of her daughters, but more particularly of the eldest; for although his heart was full of Lucy's image at the moment of his departure, yet the tears which were shed by Camilla, her noble countenance and beautiful figure, and, above all, the thoughts of the ill-usage to which he fancied she was exposed, caused him to feel a deeper degree of sorrow and sympathy than he could either have anticipated or accounted for.

These recollections recurred frequently to his mind when he left Beverley, and still more so when he contrasted the cold formality and restraint which poor Lucy had been obliged to assume when they separated, with the warm expressions of regard, the prayers for remembrance and correspondence, and the tears of the bewitching Camilla.

Though well acquainted with Arthur's intimacy with the Delmores, Lady Bertha did not for a moment contemplate the possibility of finding a rival in Lucy, for whom, as well as Delmore, her Ladyship entertained the greatest contempt and animosity. These sentiments of ill-will were, in the first instance, the result of

Delmore's marriage; his wife, Lady Lucy, being Lady Bertha's fourth cousin: but that which in the first instance merely arose from family feelings, afterwards became immediately personal, when she found, in despite of all her efforts with the Bishop of the diocese and Lord Roxmere, that Delmore had been nominated to the curacy of Beverley, in opposition to a person of her own selection.

Determined to revenge herself for the insult which she declared Mr. Delmore intended to put upon her, by thus placing himself within her parish, she induced her brother-in-law to withdraw the small annuity which that nobleman had hitherto paid to his sister's widower. Not content with this cruel revenge, she made it a point with all those over whom she had any influence in the neighbourhood, that they should not visit the Clergyman and his daughter: positively insisting on their choosing between her acquaintance and theirs; between the gaieties and luxuries of the Grange, and the monotony and frugality of the Parsonage. This unworthy conduct served but to augment the attention and kindness of the Roxmeres to their *pro-*

tégés; and although sufficiently irritated against the latter by all the ill-success of her endeavours to deprive him altogether of the means of subsistence, yet a blow was in store for Lady Bertha for which she was little prepared.

No sooner had Arthur quitted the Castle, than Lady Roxmere executed her generous intention of taking Lucy under her immediate protection; and in the course of a few days, the latter was established as an inmate of the Castle.

Lord Roxmere, who had cordially entered into all the Countess' plans respecting their young friend, was not a person to adopt half measures: every hour attached him more and more to her; and had he been about to present a child of his own to the world, he could not have entered more warmly into all the details of that event. Unknown to Lucy, a variety of beautiful dresses, flowers, and trinkets,—in short, every thing which could add *éclat* to her natural beauty, were ordered by the kind old Peer; and it was difficult to determine whether the former received more pleasure from the sudden arrival of these novelties, or the

latter more satisfaction from witnessing the joy which his presents imparted.

How many girls are daily consoled for the sacrifice of the dearest feelings of the heart! how many are soothed and flattered into the most incongruous marriages by the mere prospect of those vanities, whose possession, with all due respect to the sex, forms one of the principal objects of their glory, and the leading occupation of their minds from the cradle to the tomb! Few women, even at an advanced period of life, are indifferent to the captivations of dress: and if the old and matured are susceptible of its influence; if it serves as a balm under sorrow and disappointment, a substitute for domestic happiness, and to many, solace for being united to age, decrepitude, or a man whom they abhor; one cannot be surprised if the innocent and single-hearted Lucy, who obtained these coveted vanities without a sigh, a tear, or the sacrifice of one moral or individual feeling, was elated to the utmost excess, as the glittering trinkets and costly silks were unfolded to her sight. The utmost

boast of her toilet had hitherto consisted in a plain white frock, and simple riband; a golden locket, containing a curl of her mother's hair, had been the extent of her jewellery; and if for awhile she forgot Arthur, her father, every thing, in short, but her gratitude to her noble friends, she must not be accused of selfishness or excessive frivolity.

What numerous tales could Messrs. Kitching, Howell, or any of our fashionable tradesmen, unfold of ladies already overloaded with all the glories of the toilet, who have, nevertheless, been induced, by the seductive contents of their shops, to forget ties and sentiments of a much more severe and binding character! How often has one seen the lustre of the glittering diamond and sparkling ruby, which triumphed on some lovely bosom, dimmed by the unbidden tear; and wondered that, with so much splendour, so much apparent happiness, there could exist a cause for sorrow! But Conscience is but too often a bitter and even traitorous guest.

In the mean time, Lady Roxmere directed Miss Delmore's name to be printed on her own

visiting-cards; thus intimating to her acquaintance, that Lucy was henceforth to be considered a part of her family. No sooner had these cards arrived, than the Countess directed her equipage to be got ready with more than the usual number of horses and attendants, and, accompanied by her youthful *protégée*, proceeded to pay a round of visits in the neighbourhood, in order to introduce Lucy, preparatory to the county races, which were about to take place.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that the old lady and her youthful companion were every where received with apparent demonstrations of civility and *impressement*, unbounded praises and exaggerated compliments were paid to one and the other. Some were overjoyed at seeing Lady Roxmere looking so young (who, though, in reality, not above sixty years of age, had all the appearance of a woman of seventy); it was so good of her Ladyship to think of them, so kind, so flattering to bring her charming young friend: others swore eternal friendship to Lucy, as eagerly as they had previously coalesced with Lady Bertha in refusing

to visit at the Parsonage; others again overpowered her with professions and invitations; none forgot the agreeable parties at the Castle, or the Countess' hints that her house in town would again be opened to the fashionable world the ensuing season;—but the instant their backs were turned, almost all united in a similar chorus of abuse.

Amongst the families residing in the neighbourhood, to whom Lady Roxmere presented Lucy, was that of a Sir Stephen and Lady Cornwall: the former, member for one of the county boroughs, and one of its principal agricultural orators; the latter and her daughters, some of the most important personages at all the provincial balls and races. They were people of large landed property; but of that class who, though omnipotent in the country, sink into comparative insignificance in London; and who, after a thousand disappointments and mortifications, at length discover that the capricious goddess of fashion is not always to be wooed by broad acres, jewels, and election influence; and that the slippery path to her temple often proves, like the ever rotatory tread-wheel, where

though one labour for ever, and undergo all the fatigue of a continued ascent, one never rises an inch above the level of his first commencement.

Lady Cornwall and her daughters, like many others of the same class, were scarcely known in the gay world beyond the sweeping parties, or rather gatherings, of the great lady of their own county; the books of the Opera manager, or those of the box-keepers at theatres; whilst Sir Stephen, in despite of his incessant attendance in his place, and his never failing to rise upon every question, was as little heard of beyond the walls of his namesake's chapel, as the most silent and useless member of the House. This fatality, so galling to the Baronet's vanity, but so fortunate for the public, arose from the malice of the reporters, who invariably chose the opportunity of Sir Stephen's getting on his legs, to seek refreshment in the coffee-room; coolly inserting in the paper one of those remarks with which they are accustomed to dispose of a tiresome speaker; thus, one constantly read after a debate: "Sir Stephen Cornwall made a few observations which were inaudible in the gallery;" or, "Sir Stephen Corn-

wall rose to reply; but, from the laughing and cries of question which prevailed, we were unable to catch the purport of the Honourable Baronet's words." The female Cornwalls were of that set of strange faces, and still more original bodies, for whose appearance at her party, the lady "at home" thinks it incumbent on her to apologize to her more fashionable guests, with some such excuse as, "So good of you to come! What a crowd! I fear you will scarcely know a soul: one of my battues, all country bores; I am obliged to ask them—county influence, road bills, enclosures—"

"Of course, you have got Cross from Exeter Change to keep them in order. Do you think one dare venture among them? They are not muzzled."

The Cornwalls were of those unsophisticated beings who, after toiling for months to be introduced to a string of Marchionesses and Countesses, for the mere vanity of displaying the titled visiting-cards conspicuously in a china plate on the drawing-room table, patiently pass their mornings in waiting to receive visitors who never make their appearance; or if they do

return the call, merely send their cards with the chilling "*evening*" ostensibly pencilled in the corner. They were of those who occupy their afternoons in driving from Lord Grosvenor's to the British Gallery, and from Lord Stafford's to Somerset House, (though they have not the slightest taste or knowledge of pictures,) and thence from shop to magazine, tumbling over silks and ribands which they have no intention to purchase, and then finish a day of dulness in grinding up and down the Park, where they pass utterly unnoticed, in despite of their tall footman, rubicund coachman, fat horses, glaring harness, and a coach full of staring, dairymaid daughters.

Sir Stephen himself was a cold-hearted, pompous, and selfish being, without refinement of mind or elegance of manner; but blest with the most erroneous opinion of his own wealth, importance, and talent. He had been a candidate for Boodle's since the period of his quitting school; but, in despite of leather breeches, long gaiters, and hands in pockets, corn laws and rentals, such was the reputation he enjoyed of being an arch-bore, that he had lived

long enough to undergo the extraordinary process of three rejections.

By the sacrifice of a considerable sum, expended in the temporary purchase of three or four boroughs, he had succeeded in obtaining a Baronetcy during the administration of Mr. Pitt. But his ambition had not rested there: his aim was the Peerage, in which laudable effort he however failed; and consequently he conscientiously walked over to the opposite side of the House, and became as violent in his resistance to Ministers, as he had before been subservient to their wishes.

With the language of freedom, emancipation, and the rights of the people on his lips, the love of despotism, bigotry, and aristocracy sat deeply rooted in his heart. To hear him talk, one might have supposed that every oak in his park was a tree of liberty, and that his own mansion was the temple of freedom. But no feudal baron more severely punished each trespasser on the one, or exacted more servile obedience from every creature within the other. Like many other public declaimers against oppres-

sion and despotism, there never existed a more imperious domestic tyrant, or one who more fully repaid himself, by his arbitrary conduct towards his own family and dependents, for the violence he thought fit to do his nature, by his show of liberality on the hustings and Parliamentary benches.

In addition to Lady Cornwall, a vain, time-serving woman, and one of the "Elect," the Baronet's family consisted of several children. The eldest of the girls, having persisted (against the consent of her parents) in marrying a young officer, to whom there was no other objection than want of fortune, had been cast off by her father and mother, and treated by them and her sisters with the utmost severity and want of feeling. By the supposed death of her husband, Captain Harley, (who was said to have perished on his return from the Copenhagen Expedition,) the unhappy lady and her two children were left completely destitute; but this misfortune made no alteration in the conduct of her relatives. It was principally with a view of interceding for Mrs. Harley, that

the kind-hearted Countess proceeded to the Baronet's residence; Arthur, to whose regiment Harley had belonged, having strongly urged his grandmother to lose no time in exerting herself in the poor lady's favour.

CHAPTER IX.

At the moment of Lady Roxmere's visit to Birkenholt, the family of Sir Stephen was assembled in the eating-room, busily occupied in the discussion of one of those substantial luncheons which so fortunately intervene in the country to break through the tediums of the day, when rainy weather, or the cessation of field sports, confine your real young country gentleman to the house, and leave him entirely at the mercy of his own intellect and resources; which latter may be classed under the following heads.

Sitting for an hour or two on a corn-bin, listening to the harmonious sounds with which the grooms accompany their manual operations on the heels of the horses. Smoking segars in

the harness-room, or keeping his hands in practice for driving, by tickling up the pigs as they lie buried in the straw of the farm-yard with a four-horse whip. Teaching Tom, the tail-less stable-cat, to jump through his arms, and then rewarding the poor animal's docility by worrying it with half-a-dozen terriers. Establishing a fight between his mother's pet-pug, Bijou, and the housekeeper's favourite tabby, Bess. Whistling to the turkey-cocks until they gabble and swell themselves into a state of apoplexy. Dogs-earing books of prints and etchings; humming out of tune "Cherry ripe!" and the not less eternal Jäger Chorus; curing his younger brothers' chilblains by rapping their knuckles with back-swords; and spoiling his sister's superfine scissors and work-boxes, by scratching mail-coaches on the lids of the one with the points of the other.

Several of these interesting amusements had been tried in their turn by young Squire Stephen Cornwall, who, having satiated himself with cold pie and ale, was busily employed in tracing the circumference of a coach-wheel with a three-pronged fork on the table-cloth: upon lifting

up his eye towards the park, he exclaimed, "I shall bolt; here come some of your big-wig visitors: I saw the flunkies bobbing up and down before the drag, like apples in a mill-stream." The attention of the rest of the party was attracted towards the park by this very ingenious observation; and there was a general exclamation of, "I declare! a carriage passing through the park-gates!" — "So early, my dears," said the mamma; "it surely can be none of our expected party!"

"Some horrid boring neighbours who have heard of it, perhaps, coming to give you a hint to ask them," observed Miss Dora Cornwall.

"Do, my dears, reconnoitre," answered the lady of the mansion. Two or three of the young ladies immediately flew to a table, on which stood a large telescope, placed there for the special purpose of examining visitors, long ere they reached the house; by which clever precaution, the inmates obtained sufficient time either to issue the repulsive "not at home," or to prepare for the reception of the approaching individuals with all the ceremony or indifference due to their respective ranks. After

a few moments' observation, one of the damsels exclaimed, "Six horses, and three outriders: it must be somebody of importance. Shall I ring, Mamma?"

"Who can it be? who is it?" ejaculated the whole group.

"Probably, the Lord Lieutenant coming to consult me on the disturbed state of the manufacturing classes," said Sir Stephen. "It is really very hard, that the public authorities cannot act on any occasion without troubling me for my advice."

"It's the Yarmouth heavy, more likely," said the young Squire; "to judge by the pace it comes: just look how the dragsman handles the ribands!"

"Ribands, brother!" exclaimed all the Misses Cornwalls in chorus: "what! favours? Who can it be?—a wedding visit?"

"Highly improbable, my dears," said the mamma. "I should scarcely suppose that any person in the county, with six horses and three outriders, would think of marrying without previously communicating the event to us."

"Ribands!" also exclaimed the Baronet;

" they must be election colours. Mr. Toadywell, in consequence of his recent appointment, has vacated his seat; there is an opening for Rottenhill—it must be the new candidate."

Delighted at having accidentally mystified his relatives, Mr. Stephen continued: " Marry! ay, marry, come up: titch! titch!" and he accompanied his words with that kind of hissing sound with which coachmen excite their horses; whilst he twisted his fingers right and left, as if he had a whip in his hand—" Ay! and as nice a pair as ever I saw!"

" Dear me," exclaimed the united band, " who can they be? How very uncivil, not even to have sent us some cake!"

" It 's incredible, my loves!" rejoined the mamma.

" Why then, look yourself, mother," answered the Squire, grinning at his own wit; " and if they a'ent as nice a pair of leaders as ever you saw, then I don't know what 's what."

" I must request, Stephen," said the Baronet, much annoyed, " that you will refrain,

in my presence, from a style of conversation totally unbecoming your station and prospect in life: your language would even disgrace the low class of men whom it appears to be your sole aim to imitate and surpass. Can you not inform us in simple English who they are?"

"Well, that would be like driving three blind ones and a bolter," replied the incorrigible youth. "How am I to tell who's booked inside, if I haven't seen the way-bill?"

"Blue and silver! I see it plainly," said Miss Cornwall, who had taken her place at the glass. "Then it must be the Roxmeres," added another of the girls; "no one else with that livery drives six horses."

"Then ring directly for the butler, my dears. What can that horrid boring old woman want? We have not seen her so long, I was in hopes she was bed-ridden," exclaimed the godly lady.

"It is much more probable," said Sir Stephen, "that my noble friend, the Earl, is coming to take my opinion on the bill he intends bringing in next session. I have been in dread of this visit for the last six weeks.

I must really announce to my acquaintance, that my health is unequal to the labours which are imposed upon me:" and then adding, "When his Lordship arrives, let him be shown into my cabinet," he retired.

"Much more likely," said Lady Cornwall, when the door closed, "that it is Lady Roxmere with one of her begging petitions; but if it is, I shall refuse. I do not think she has any claim upon my charity, since she refused to patronize my philanthropic branch of the North-east Grand Junction Auxiliary Bible Society:" and then, as the butler entered, she added,—"Potts, direct all the servants to be ready in the hall, and let them put on their best liveries."

"Their best with tags, my Lady?"

"Of course, Potts!—it is the Countess of Roxmere and six horses;—and Potts, let a hot poker be put in the state drawing-room fire."

"Are the covers to be taken off the damask chairs, my Lady?" demanded the butler.

"Certainly! if there is time. Always let that be done when it is a Countess, or a person

of higher degree; and let luncheon be got ready in the grand eating-room."

"Plate or china, my Lady?" asked the man.

"Plate, of course, you stupid fellow! Always plate when there are outriders; and let covers be laid for a dozen, as if we always expected many visitors."

"Very well, my Lady," replied the butler; and then turning, ere he left the room, he said, "Cape or Madeira, my Lady? there's nothing but Cape up."

"Oh! Madeira, of course; but not the old East-India, Potts.—And Potts, I forgot to say, send all the people to the inn: no guzzling, if you please, in the servants' hall."

"Yes, my Lady," answered the man; "but they always take us in at the Castle, my Lady."

"That is their affair; do as I order. And remember, no sneaking round the shrubbery with ale, Mr. Potts."

"No, my Lady," was the butler's answer; as, hastening out of the room, he muttered, "If one's obliged to treat other folks' servants in this kind of niggerly way, we shall have other folks' servants slamming the doors in one's faces, and no getting nothing comfortable: if this is to

be the go, I shall give warning, and better myself;" and he forthwith retired to the pantry, and emptied the remainder of a bottle of Cape wine, by way of consolation.

"Now my dears," said Lady Cornwall, "let us prepare for the enemy.—Dora, my love, put out some of the embroidery your governess worked for you, and employ yourself in picking-out some threads.—Martha, my dear, open your drawing things, and show the sketch from nature you copied from Mr. Easel.—Bella, put the chess-men in confusion; I dare say, the stupid housemaid has set them all in order.—Flora, place the book Lady Roxmere sent me to read two months ago, on my stand; and then sit down to your harp."

"The leaves are not cut of your book, and there are not ten strings left to the harp," replied Miss Flora.

"Then fetch me a volume of Sermons, or the Last Transactions of the Society for the Conversion of the Esquimaux; and crack another string just as they come in, that will answer all the purpose."

Lieutenant Cornwall, an officer in the navy, who was an old playfellow and friend of Ar-

thur Beverley's, and who had witnessed all that had passed, now ventured to say, " Why, what, in the name of heaven—!"

" Do not take the name of heaven in vain, George. I am shocked at your profaneness," said Lady Cornwall, interrupting him. " I am sure, if Lord Gambier was to hear you, you would never be promoted," added her Ladyship, as she left the room.

" You are all bewitched, I believe," said the sailor, " since poor Julia has left you. Why all this nonsensical prepararation for that good old lady ?"

" Oh !" said Miss Bella, " you know, the horrid old woman is so dreadfully blue, so shockingly prosy, that we should be lost for ever if we were not *caught* doing something literary or domestic."

" Why, you will all be as bad as old Pampyford," exclaimed the Squire.

" And who is she, Stephen ?" demanded the sailor.

" Why the old girl that lives at Pine Apple Grove, with six cats and seven pet spaniels, and they all sleep in four-post beds, and have their hands and faces washed with

rose-water. I made a bag of her best tortoise-shell Tom; and she went into mourning because my bull-dog ate him."

The carriage now approached the door, and in a few seconds Lady Roxmere and Lucy were ushered into the drawing-room, amidst the screams and exclamation of well-feigned surprise from the whole group. "What? can it be possible!" exclaimed the hostess,—"Lady Roxmere? dear Lady Roxmere! how delighted I am to see you!—We were just talking of you.—What an age since we have met!—How kind thus to take us by surprise!—How is the dear Earl?—Girls, Bella, Martia, take dear Lady Roxmere's cloak."

"Permit me to present my particular friend, Miss Delmore, who is in future to reside with me," replied the Countess, after the usual salutations.

The young ladies all bowed formally, and whispered among themselves—"Some charity girl, I suppose,—some humble companion: rather cool bringing her here."

"What?" said Lady Cornwall,—"a daughter of that worthy man, Mr. Delmore, of Beverley, of whom we have heard so much?"

"The same," replied the Countess; "he has had the kindness to intrust his treasure to my care."

"So kind of you to take notice of her, my dear Lady Roxmere," whined out the hostess; "so completely in that spirit of Christian benevolence which guides all your actions,—always charitable."

"Always grateful for the obligations I receive," answered Lady Roxmere: "and it is impossible Mr. Delmore could have conferred a greater favour, or given me a more decided proof of his esteem and confidence, than by permitting this dear child to supply the void which is caused by the absence of my poor Arthur.—But I hope," continued the Countess, pressing Lucy's hand, "that she will not find Beverley Castle, or St. James's Square, quite so dull as they have been of late years. I must now endeavour to rally: I have a daughter to present, for in that light Lord Roxmere and I consider Miss Delmore."

In a moment Lady Cornwall saw that she was, what her son called, on a wrong cast; and she therefore exclaimed, "How enchanted I am to make her acquaintance! I hope

we shall see a great deal of her.—How strikingly handsome!" added she in a half whisper to Lady Roxmere; and then aloud, "Miss Delmore, I must introduce you, individually, to all my daughters. Lucy! what a pretty name! I like it so much, so unaffected. —Here Dora! Bella! Martia! Flora! Miss Delmore;—Miss Delmore, my daughters."

The young ladies, who had heard the word gaieties, took the hint. "We must toady," whispered they among themselves; and immediately quitting the embroidery, drawing, chess, and music, at which they pretended to be occupied, they crowded round Lucy, and commenced a volley of compliments.

Intent upon the benevolent object which had been the principal motive of her visit to Birkenholt, Lady Roxmere now intimated her desire to be allowed a few moments' private conversation with her host and hostess; which being of course acceded to, the two ladies proceeded to the Baronet's cabinet, where I will leave the kind-hearted Countess urging her suit with all the eloquence of real feeling and true Christian generosity, whilst I return to the drawing-room.

"Had you a gay season in town last year?" said Miss Bella, addressing Lucy. "Mamma was obliged to go to Bath for the waters: but I heard we had no loss;—balls few, parties stupid, operas dull, and very few new young men."

Lucy, who really did not at the moment remember the all-engulfing acceptation of the word "town," and who had never been farther than the metropolis of the county, answered *naïvely*, "I thought it appeared very gay, though I went there twice only: once, when my father preached for the benefit of the infirmary; and again, for a short time, shopping with Lady Roxmere." This innocent answer produced a titter of contempt from all the Cornwalls, who were well aware poor Lucy had never been in London; but were determined to show her up, as Mr. Stephen declared afterwards.

"Of course, you went to the play whilst you were there?" said Miss Dora; "that is all one can do *en passant*."

"I am almost ashamed to say, that I never went to a play," was Lucy's reply.

"La! how unsophisticated!" said Miss Martia: "that means, you do not choose to

confess you are right; for no fashionable person ever does go to the play,—that is to say, except in a private box, or *incog.* Whenever Mamma did take a box to oblige her friend, Mrs. Siddons, it was always in the name of Mrs. Green, or Mrs. White, or some such vulgar *nom de guerre.*"

"Indeed!" said Lucy, who was completely mystified: "I never knew that there was any impropriety in going to a play."

"No; not exactly improper," returned Miss Dora: "I only mean vulgar—low."

"I had always understood that persons of the first rank and respectability frequented the theatres," answered Lucy, with an air of surprise.

"Frequent the theatres! What a very low expression!" said Miss Martia, aside.

"Respectability! Oh yes," ejaculated Miss Dora: "fat, fubsy citizens, and commercial people. But as that amusing creature, Lord Pinfold, says,—he 's coming here, by-the-by, for the meeting—'Respectability is quite *mauvais ton;* you judge of people by their ties, their park hacks, the Morning Post list of the

people they dance with, and the Club they belong to.' For instance, Lord Pinfold says that the 'Alfred' is very respectable; but unless a man belongs to 'White's,' he is considered low. Respectability is very absurd: one's mantua-maker, Howel, Cooper, or Flint, are immensely respectable; but one does not like to be classed with that sort of person."

"I was really not aware of this," said Lucy, who began to comprehend her new acquaintance: "however," added she, "Lord and Lady Roxmere must also be very vulgar; for they frequently take a couple of places in a public box, and enjoy themselves extremely."

"Oh! Lord and Lady Roxmere, you know, can do any thing, they are so popular, and of such high rank," rejoined Miss Dora; whilst her sister muttered, "Old Goths!" "they can set fashion at defiance; besides, you know, it may be from habit: Grandmamma tells me that it was not considered low in her day for the first people to go publicly to the play."

Lucy could scarcely refrain from laughing at what Miss Cornwall called *low*, but before she had time to answer, Dora exclaimed; "But as

you will not confess that you went to the play, come, surely you do not think it improper to avow that you were at the opera."

"Oh, that is quite correct!" screamed the whole quartette. "We never missed a single Saturday," continued Miss Dora; "and it was delightful! the managers are such nice people! They gave the same opera over and over again, night after night; so one had nothing to distract one's attention, or to prevent one's talking and looking about."

"Surely," observed Lucy, "however fond one might be of music, it must be very tedious to hear the same piece so frequently repeated."

"Oh dear, no; quite the reverse: nobody thinks of listening to the music, except a few fanaticos; at least, not until the ballet begins," rejoined the advocate of fashion; "then, indeed, one is all attention to the dear dancers; before that, you look at the pit, and smile if you see any fashionable friends; and the pit looks at you, smiles, and casts up its eye; but does not bow,—that would be low. But the moment the first *Pas de Zéphire* comes hopping on the stage, then you might hear a mouse sigh, so

attentive is the whole house. Do you know? Lord Pinfold very often used to ask me, when we were jammed in the delighful round room, what Opera they had given; and of course," added Miss Dora, simpering, "I could not tell,—it would have been low."

"Then probably neither you nor his Lordship are fond of music?" answered Lucy, restraining her inclination to laugh.

"Passionately!" replied Miss Dora; "we are all musical, and he is fanatico; he takes lessons of Boccabuona, and plays divinely on the guitar; but it's low to pay attention,—it is not Italian. The Marquess Fanfaretti says, that at St. Carlos and the Scala, not even the Lazzaroni think of the music, unless the tenor or *prima donna* are on the stage. But confess you are only quizzing; I see you smile: avow that you talk half the time, and *lorgnez* the beaux in the pit during the remainder."

"Indeed," said Lucy, composing her countenance, "I never had an opportunity of doing either: I never saw an opera; but I look forward to it with infinite delight; I would not lose a note."

"La!" ejaculated Miss Dora, "how ingenuous! quite *à la pastorelle*, as Lord Pinfold would say."

"If you are so fond of music as all that comes to, Miss," said the Squire, who had hitherto remained silent, "I wish you only heard the shooter of the Tally-ho—that's the guard, as you would call him—play 'Jumping Jenny,' with variations, on the key bugle."

"Brother, you are an absolute Vandal!" exclaimed one of the girls.

"Not so slow as all that comes to neither," answered Mr. Stephen, catching the first syllable only of the last word.

"You must really get rid of these Gothic ideas, my dear Miss Delmore," continued Miss Cornwall, "and remember that the opera is not a place for music; one goes there merely to talk, to be looked at, and to have the pleasure of waiting for the carriage. Do you know? Lord Pinfold assured me, it is quite common for ladies to order their footmen never to answer until the Guards are removed, and the lights put out."

"My whole thoughts would be so completely wrapped up in the music," replied Lucy,

" that I should wish every person who spoke to me punished for their chattering, like Papageno in the Zauberflöte. With what delight do I look forward to a representation of one of Mozart's operas!"

" Mozart!" exclaimed the whole tribe: " Mozart! you must be joking; surely you mean Rossini?"

" No, indeed," answered Lucy; " I am a great admirer of Mozart."

" Impossible! my dear Miss Delmore. Heavens! do not say so, or you will never be asked any where: you must be a Rossinist;—every one, bon gré, mal gré, is a Rossinist. Mozart has been out of fashion this age, quite low—it is delightful now in town, instead of hearing the eternal '*Fin ch'an dall vino*' screeched by the pot-boys, the very dustmen whistle '*Di tanti palpiti.*' Lord Penfold, who is an enthusiastic Rossinist, turned off his valet for eternally humming '*La ci darem;*' and one day, as he passed a hackney coach-stand, he heard one of the drivers whistle an air from the '*Gazza ladra*' so admirably, that he stopped

his cabriolet, and hired the man as his body-coachman."

Their farther conversation was now interrupted by the return of Lady Roxmere, attended by the Baronet and his lady; and after a few minutes the carriage was ordered, and the visitors departed.

When seated in the vehicle, the Countess replied to her young friend's eager questions, by announcing the complete failure of her mediation; as Sir Stephen, and particularly Lady Cornwall, remained inexorable. Although Lady Roxmere could not avoid commenting on the relentless severity of Mrs. Harley's parents, yet she pointed out to Lucy, in a manner not less forcible, the impropriety of that lady's conduct in the first instance, and the consequent suffering and severe retribution which must ever be the result of filial disobedience.

Not having found the Grantham family at home, the Countess proceeded to the Castle, where on their arrival, they were met by Lord Roxmere, who placed a letter from Arthur in Lady Roxmere's hands; and it was with real

pleasure the good old lady read aloud the following: —

"Plymouth,—March, 180—.

"Aware of the interest you take in Harley's fate, I hasten to tell you, that he is alive, well, and once more restored to the arms of his wife. His escape was most fortunate. When the vessel struck, he and a few others cleared the wreck in one of the boats; but, after several hours' fruitless exertions, were again driven on the Friesland coast. All perished save Harley and a seaman: they were rescued and concealed by a fisherman, and eventually conveyed in safety to Heligoland. Our first-major being promoted, Harley succeeds to the vacant commission, and is posted to our battalion, which is ordered to hold itself in readiness for immediate embarkation. To part so soon again, after so short a re-union, will be a severe blow to our friends the Harleys; but the woman who marries and really loves a soldier, must arm her mind with more than common fortitude and resignation. I hope I am not quite forgotten by Lucy; though, to judge by the cold manner in which she took leave of me, I must have

been out of mind, almost before I was out of sight. If you see Camilla Grantham, tell her that our band and bugles play the march she gave me to perfection: it is a favourite with the whole corps. Many of our officers, who met her at Brighton, thought her beautiful. I suppose she will be carried off the first season that she is presented in London; she will be a sad loss to the neighbourhood of the old Castle, and I regret that I saw so little of her."

Lady Roxmere, in her eagerness to read her grandson's letter to the Earl, had proceeded thus far, ere she perceived Miss Delmore was still near her; and she immediately closed the epistle: but Lucy had heard enough to cause her the deepest pain. Hastening out of the room, she hurried to her own chamber; and as the splendid portrait of Arthur which adorned the gallery met her eye, she almost shuddered with agony. Poor girl! in addition to all her previous annoyance, a new and hitherto unknown sentiment had been suddenly called into life by the latter part of Arthur's letter. Jealousy, that mortal foe to tranquillity and forgetfulness, had taken sudden possession of her mind, and added

fresh pangs to the bitterness of her feelings—she vowed, she determined to drive him from her mind, but her throbbing heart quickly discovered,

"Qu'en songeant qu'il faut qu'on l'oublie,
On s'en souvient."

CHAPTER X.

No where did Lady Roxmere's visit create greater sensation than at the Grange, where a large party was expected for the races. Lady Bertha and her eldest daughter had been absent from home during the morning; and on their return, Miss Grantham proceeded to examine the visiting-cards which were scattered on the marble-hall table, and in a moment her eye caught the visiting-ticket of the Countess, and with a sort of scream she exclaimed, "What is this? The Countess of Roxmere! et plus bas, Miss Delmore!"

"Impossible, my love! What, the girl from the curacy?" ejaculated Lady Bertha.

"Yes, printed in huge letters, as gothic as herself; and on the same card, mamma," replied

the daughter. "Incredible!" again exclaimed her Ladyship; and then requesting to look at the well-printed cause of her surprise, she added, "It must be a mistake; Lady Roxmere could hardly presume to bring her here."

"And why not?" said Fanny Grantham, who had entered the room.

"Why not, Fanny?" retorted the sister with a sneer. "You might as well ask why she did not bring her dairymaid. I think it most extraordinary, after all that has occurred."

"I see nothing extraordinary in it," replied the younger girl calmly; "every one speaks in the most enthusiastic terms of Miss Delmore; and I hear that she is in future to reside and go out with Lady Roxmere."

"How disgusting! how perplexing!" exclaimed Lady Bertha.

"I do not believe it," echoed Camilla; "it is one of Fanny's inventions; she has always some pleasant information to greet one with."

"If it is true," said Lady Bertha, "I

shall conclude that horrid old bore has done it purposely to vex me."

"I do not exactly see how the performance of a kind action, on the part of Lady Roxmere, or her adoption of Miss Delmore, can annoy any of us, mamma," rejoined Fanny: "for my own part, I am delighted at the idea of making her acquaintance."

"Of course, you 're delighted with every thing that vexes me," retorted her mamma: "it is just like you."

"I suppose, Fanny," added the elder Miss Grantham, "to complete your budget, you will tell us that we are to visit the people at the Parsonage."

"Certainly, if ever you wish to be asked to St. James's Square; for they say that Lucy Delmore is to be introduced at the race-ball; and, in fact, that she is treated at the Castle exactly as if she were daughter to the Earl and Countess."

"Where did you pick up this intelligence, Fanny?" demanded the mother.

"Tape went to the Castle yesterday to drink

tea, and she heard it there; and she saw all the beautiful dresses and presents which have been given to Miss Delmore."

"Dresses and presents! Why the girl is surely not to be palmed upon society? this is really carrying the joke too far."

"More than that, mamma; Tape says it is understood at the Castle, that Lucy is to marry Mr. Beverley directly he comes of age."

"Nonsense, Fanny!" returned her mother, evidently very much vexed; "as Camilla says, you always pick up some disagreeable intelligence;—not that I care whom Mr. Beverley marries; only, as near neighbours, I should prefer his choosing some person whom one would like to visit; but," continued her Ladyship, addressing her younger daughter, "it is highly improper in you to talk to Tape in the familiar manner in which you appear to have done: it is extremely unbecoming in any girl to converse upon such subjects with her maid."

"I never did before," replied Fanny, "and I regret having done so now; for I hate such gossiping, and think it very wrong and very

indelicate; but I confess, mamma, it gave me so much pleasure to hear of Miss Delmore's good fortune, that I permitted Tape to rattle on without consideration."

"It was most indecorous," rejoined her mother; "and if ever you allow Mrs. Tape to take such liberties again, I shall dismiss her, and severely punish you;—no young woman of proper delicacy or feeling would descend to such familiarity. Hence arise half the quarrels, mischief, and misunderstandings which so often disturb the repose of families."

Fanny made no reply to a reproof which, though perfectly just in its sense, was more merited by her sister than herself; as Camilla Grantham was constantly guilty of the odious and unlady-like habit (unfortunately so prevalent amongst ladies) of making a confidante of her waiting-woman, and of talking to her with a degree of easy freedom and familiarity, as dangerous to the morals of the one, as it was subversive to the principles of respect and obedience of the other.

After a short pause, Lady Bertha desired the bell might be rung, adding, "I shall send for

Mrs. Tape, and point out to her both the impropriety of her going out without leave, and of gossiping with you; though it is more your fault than hers, Fanny."

Although perfectly sincere in her disapprobation of the pernicious custom she reprobated, yet Lady Bertha's principal motive for summoning the abigail was to ascertain farther particulars respecting Lucy, in order that she might take her own measures in consequence. In a few minutes the smart waiting-woman tapped at the door, and poked in her head, with the usual "My Lady, did your Ladyship please to wish to speak to me?"

"Yes, Tape," said Lady Bertha. "Here, come closer; do not stand fidgetting with your body half in and your legs half out of the room; if it were in the Dog-days you would shut the door."

"Yes, my Lady," answered the abigail; "only your Ladyship has quite befluttered me; I'm not drist to appear before your Ladyship."

"Oh, never mind that, Tape: if you were to occupy yourself more with your mistress's dresses, and think less of your own, it would

be better both for their appearance and your reputation," rejoined Lady Bertha, as she eyed with a severe look the smart silk gown, hair in ringlets without cap, sandalled shoes, and worked falling collar of the spruce Mrs. Tape.

"Mem!"

"Pray, Tape, were you at the Castle last night?" demanded Lady Bertha.

"Yes," replied the tire-woman, hesitating, and casting an upbraiding look at Fanny, who had utterly forgotten that Mrs. Tape's gossip had been communicated under a promise of secrecy. "Yes, my Lady," she continued: "Mrs. Makesop, the Countess's housekeeper, had a small party."

"Quadrilles, of course!" said Lady Bertha.

"No, my Lady," replied Tape seriously; "Mounsheer Spareman had a whitlow, and could not play the violin; so we were disappinted of the codrills, and only had *cords;* and I was back by twelve, my Lady; and Mr. M'Gillybloom, the gardener, 'scorted me there, and purtikted me back."

"I think, Tape, you might have condescended to ask my permission before you went,"

said Lady Bertha; "besides, I have already cautioned you about your intimacy with the gardener."

"Lud! my Lady, Mem!" answered the abigail; "I am sure your Ladyship wouldn't wish to deprive one of one's hinnocent amoosements, and 'mure one up in the country so many months."

"Enough of this," said her Ladyship. "I beg to know what you heard at the Castle about Miss Delmore? What is this nonsense you have been gossiping to Miss Fanny?"

"I 'll disclose all I know, my Lady," replied the maid, "only I beg your Ladyship's pardon, Mem; but if your Ladyship ar' n't pleased with my aperience—if I don't give satisfaction, my Lady, I think, Mem, you had better look out for another waiting-gentlewoman for the young ladies. It 's purtikly uncomfortable to have such severe proscriptions put on one's behavur. My late mistress, the Duchess of Dustminster, never asked no solutions; and I was quite a fool to think of retracting from her Grace's service; and certainly, I never expicted your Ladyship would have cast any double-intenders

on my karakter." And upon this Mrs. Tape burst into tears, took out a smart embroidered handkerchief, and sobbed aloud.

"I am not angry, nor do I intend to reflect upon you, silly woman!" answered Lady Bertha soothingly, who, in fact, had little inclination to part with Mrs. Tape, whom she had seduced from the Duchess's service by the offer of higher wages.

"I hope not, my Lady, Mem," rejoined the abigail; "karakter's all what persins in my sitiation has to depend upon."

"Then you ought to look to its preservation yourself, Tape," rejoined her mistress. "All I want to know at present is, what you heard at the Castle about this Miss Delmore."

Amongst other qualifications, Mrs. Tape possessed no small share of cunning. She had long suspected her mistress's schemes upon Arthur; and determining to revenge herself for the lecture she had received, she answered—"Oh! nothing purtikler, my Lady; nothing more than what every body knows: and if there was any secret, my Lady, I am sure, Mem, you would not like any persin on your

Ladyship's establishment to go a heaves-dropping."

"How can there be any secret, if all the world knows it, as you say, you silly woman?" answered Lady Bertha.

"Certainly, my Lady, there's nothing pecoolier, as I know; only it's quite sittled, that Miss Delmore is to marry Mr. Beverley."

"Who told you this trash?" inquired Lady Bertha, much vexed; whilst Camilla endeavoured to conceal her annoyance by stirring the fire.

Their vexation was lost upon Mrs. Tape, who rejoined, "O Mem, I had it from Mrs. Makesop, the housekeeper, and several other gentlemen and ladies, what was taking a snack in the steward's room; whilst Mounsheer Spareman and I was hindulging in a game of pickit."

"Servants'-hall trash!" exclaimed Lady Bertha. "How can you venture to bring home such nonsense?"

"I ask your Ladyship's pardon, my Lady; indeed, I hope your Ladyship, Mem, don't make no kumparisins between the company in the steward's room and the hoy-polly, as Mr. M'Gillybloom calls them in the servant's hall;

I assure you, my Lady," added the indignant tire-woman, "I knows better how to keep myself to myself, than to make no such coass acquaintance." Lady Bertha, in despite of her vexation, could scarcely restrain her smiles; whilst Fanny laughed aloud. "You may think it very ridiklous Miss, if you please," exclaimed the angry abigail, almost forgetting her usual dread of Lady Bertha: "if you do not believe it, Mem, I can give your Ladyship the most immaculate proofs; for Madame Denthill, knowing I was a perfect cannysewer, as Mr. M'Gillybloom says, took and showed me the wedding clothes: the true-sew, as the French call it."

"True, nonsense!" exclaimed Lady Bertha, disguising her vexation with a loud laugh; "I do not care whether they are to marry or not: all I want to know is, whether Miss Delmore is to reside at the Castle, and to be introduced."

"As sure as eggs, my Lady, as Mr. Forage said," rejoined Mrs. Tape, "and it is the beautifullest true-sew, I ever witnessed."

After a few more questions, the waiting-woman was dismissed; and as soon as she quitted

the room, Lady Bertha exclaimed, "This is extremely unpleasant, and places me in the most disagreeable situation. As for the marriage, I don't believe a word about it; but we must now either visit these odious Delmores, or offend Lady Roxmere."

"Oh, I dare say, mamma, we shall have Lord Roxmere's card next, with the Parson's name printed upon it; they seem to hunt in couples. But I hope you will not return the visit."

"I sincerely hope you will, Mamma," observed Fanny: "all the neighbourhood rings with Miss Delmore's praises; it is evident she is to marry Mr. Beverley; and, above all, is she not our cousin?"

"Cousin, indeed!" exclaimed Miss Grantham; "if you believe papa, we have a hundred; but you do not mean to say that we ought to visit them?"

"It must appear extremely unkind and unnatural, at all events," said Fanny, "that we never have taken any notice of our cousin Lucy."

"You are extremely impertinent, Fanny,"

rejoined her mother, "and I must request you will hold your tongue, or quit the room; there is something highly indecent in your daring to criticise my conduct.—Cousins, forsooth! I have no doubt you would rejoice to see the house filled with your father's vulgar relations. You seem to forget whose daughter you are, or, rather, who is your mother."

"God forbid," replied Fanny, "that I should ever give you cause to think so, dearest mamma! I am as little inclined to forget that I am your child, as that Miss Delmore is our cousin."

"What is all this dispute about?" exclaimed Mr. Grantham, who entered the apartment at this moment. "*Quoi, Fanny, tu pleures!*" (and there was an awful gurgling of the r,) "and your pretty face, Camilla, as black as Good Friday in the City; *et toi, ma chère, pourquoi cette colère?*"

"I beg, Mr. Grantham," rejoined her Ladyship, with the utmost contempt, "that you will not make any remarks either on me or my daughters; I shall not submit to be dictated to."

"Dictated to!" exclaimed the husband;

"Sacre! why I scarcely uttered a word. Surely I may be allowed—"

"Not to sputter your vulgar French in my presence," retorted the Lady, "or to interfere between me and my daughters, Sir, unless you wish them to resemble your own family; but as I have something of importance to arrange with them, I request you will leave us." Mr. Grantham, who knew the utter inutility of arguing with his imperious wife, was about to retire, when her Ladyship called him back, saying, "Oh, here, Mr. Grantham, Lady Roxmere has called for the purpose of introducing Miss Delmore; and I hear the girl is to be presented to the whole county, and taken to London; so there is no option for me, but to quarrel with the Roxmeres, or to visit people whom we have made it a point to avoid."

"Do not say *we*," replied the husband. "*I* merely did so because *you* desired it; but I shall be *trop charmé* to have an opportunity of making their acquaintance."

"You would be glad to do any low thing, I dare say," retorted Lady Bertha; "but now there is no choice, for we must;—therefore

order your horse, and call at the Parsonage directly. I have important reasons for wishing to be amongst the first who visit them."

"Will it not look *un peu extraordinaire*, your showing this sudden eagerness, after the aversion you have evinced during so many years?" observed the husband. "I should recommend—"

"You may save yourself the trouble," returned her Ladyship, interposing; "it is quite sufficient that you should recommend a measure, to deter me from its execution."

"*Parole d'honneur, c'est trop fort!*" exclaimed Mr. Grantham; "I merely meant to observe—"

"Then reserve your observations until they are called for."

"But, for God's sake, let me speak! you drive every thing out of my head. I merely came to tell you, that the Marquis of Colnbrook and Mr. Maltby propose coming here for the races. —So put on your best smiles," added he, turning to his daughters; "and although your mamma accuses me of never doing any thing to promote your success in life, it will not be my fault if, in due time, one is not a Marchioness, and

the other as happy as ten thousand a-year can make her, and, if she has any luck, a Countess into the bargain. Lord Colnbrook spoke to me in raptures of you, Camilla; and I have strong grounds to suppose that Mr. Maltby intends proposing to you, Fanny: you are not aware, perhaps, that he is heir at law to the Roxmere Peerage, and will succeed to the title in the event of young Beverley's death;—what think you of that?"

"Think!" exclaimed Fanny, "that I would not marry him, papa, though he were destined to inherit a crown instead of a coronet. I hear that he is a wicked, unprincipled profligate, who would make any woman miserable."

"But I conclude that you are not entirely your own mistress," rejoined Mr. Grantham. "*Diable!* I suppose, in this matter at least I may have—"

"I do not know what you may have," retorted Lady Bertha contemptuously; "but this I know, that you have no business to interfere in the establishment of my daughters,—that is my affair alone; though you certainly have exhibited more sense than usual on this

occasion.—Yes," added her Ladyship, addressing Fanny, "I have no doubt that Mr. Maltby may have his faults, and may be a little wild;—what young man of spirit and fortune is not?—but with his present property and future chances, he will have my decided concurrence if he proposes, and I shall expect obedience."

"Heaven forbid! dearest mother," replied Fanny, "that you should think of sacrificing me to such a man! I would sooner perish."

"You are extremely obstinate and childish," answered the mother; "therefore, pray leave the room: it is excessively impertinent in you to suppose that I should ever think of uniting you to any person who was unworthy of becoming my son-in-law: I hate this romantic trash."

Fanny obeyed, and with tearful eyes retired to her apartment; the happiness she had promised herself, both from the acquaintance of Lucy and the approaching festive scenes, being entirely blighted by the announcement of the man's arrival, for whose character she had such just cause to feel the greatest aversion.

Atfer a short conversation between the remain-

ing trio, it was resolved that a letter should forthwith be written to the Countess, and that the whole party should call at the Castle on the subsequent morning. Lady Bertha's note was couched in the following terms: "I was *au désespoir*, my dearest Lady Roxmere, to find, on returning home, that you had called during my absence. How kind of you to come!—how unfortunate that I should have been out! My regrets are doubly increased since we missed the opportunity of seeing, under this roof, our amiable relation, whose acquaintance I have been withheld from making solely from family motives, and yet stricter injunctions of my cousin; but I am overjoyed at having a plausible excuse for breaking through this sort of *cordon sanitaire*. I hope you received my note of this morning; and that, to the pleasure of your own company, you will add that of Miss Delmore. The girls are dying to embrace her. By-the-bye, Mr. Grantham, who is always making some horrid *bévue*, has invited Mr. Maltby for the races, at which I 'm extremely vexed; but I console myself with the reflection that your heart and mind are too generous, and too noble

to bear any ill-will towards a person, who is claimant for that, to which God grant he may never have a nearer title!"

To this specimen of sincerity a civil answer was returned; and it was therefore settled that the Roxmeres and Lucy should dine and sleep at the Grange, on their way to the county town. The period prior to this event was employed by the inmates of the Castle and Grange in discussing the anticipated gaieties rather than in making any extraordinary preparations. The well-organized establishments of these two mansions, habituated to the reception of guests of the first rank, neither evinced any unusual bustle, nor received any extraordinary orders, except, perhaps, to add a few covers to the dining-table, and to prepare a few additional beds; but this was performed with the tranquillity which characterizes the arrangements of individuals, who, to the advantages of large fortunes, unite good taste, good breeding, and knowledge of the world: ingredients infinitely more essential to the gratification of visitors, than all that pompous and overdone display to which, in nine cases out of ten, the aforesaid

visitors are utterly indifferent. This, however, was not the case either at Birkenholt, or many other houses in the neighbourhood.

There were orderings from mistresses, counter-orderings from misses, and contradictions from papas. Here were jostlings of awkward men, and disputes between clumsy, red-armed maids, accompanied by clatterings of company-china, and jinglings of holiday glass; interlarded with "that ae'nt my business! this ae'nt my place! and I'll tell master." Here the preservative lady (her own housekeeper) was *à couteaux tirés* with the destructive cook, adding her own tears to those of weeping jellies and melting *blanc-mangers*, not to mention *soi-disant* French rolls, with truly British features, singed to a cinder in their fiery womb, or would-be raised pastry with an obstinate tendency to the centre of gravity. Then again were wailings and gnashing of teeth at the desertion of venison, and the consequent substitution of south-down; whilst wild rabbits, too cunning to be caught, were to be replaced by their cabbage-fed domestic kindred. Here existed all the miseries of coaches arriving punctually, but

alas! fish faithless, oysters and lobsters truant, game too high, and cellars too low; together with all the perplexities of rain pouring into best bed-room, laced pillows singed with warming-pans, almond-paste eaten by the rats, side dishes wanting, piano-forte out of tune, excuses from all the neighbouring garrison except the fat Major, cook drunk, butler giving warning, —in short, all the thousand agonies and mortifications which, perhaps, torture the worthy host and hostess, whilst their expected visitants are either tranquilly amusing themselves elsewhere, or rolling in their carriages, utterly indifferent to all the shifts, efforts, torments, and disappointments which so frequently precede their arrival.

In the mean time, the Granthams returned Lady Roxmere's visit; and on this occasion Lady Bertha exhibited all that fascination and charm of manner which she so well knew how to assume, when it suited her purpose. Camilla also, as if in rivalry of her mother, was all animation and good-humour; whilst Fanny, as much delighted as she was surprised at this apparent change in their sentiments, gave way

to all the natural affection and tenderness of her heart, and from that hour an intimacy arose between her and Lucy, which the severest trials never could diminish. In short, so well did Lady Bertha and her eldest daughter play their parts, that both Lucy and her friends were as much deceived as they were gratified; and it was with real pleasure that they looked forward to join the Granthams at the meeting.

The feelings of satisfaction which the unexpected kindness of her kinswoman had awakened in Lucy's bosom, were not, however, without some mixture of alloy: she was not above the weakness of human nature; and in despite of the supposed hopelessness of her attachment, in defiance of every good resolution and even friendly feeling towards her cousin, yet she gazed with no less envy than admiration on the lovely features and noble form of the person who was her supposed rival in the affections of Arthur. She felt, it is true, most grateful for the friendly professions of her cousin; but the tear stole into her eye, and her heart almost sickened, when she compared Camilla's splendid beauty and brilliant station in life,

with her own personal inferiority, poverty, and dependence.

On the other hand, the interview between the girls had acted on the mind of Camilla precisely as her mother could have desired. It cannot be supposed that she had ever felt any affection for Arthur; indeed, until within the last twenty-four hours, she had been as indifferent on the subject, and had lent herself with as much apathy to her mother's schemes, as it was possible for a girl of seventeen, who is told that it will be her own fault if she does not become mistress not only of a noble title and splendid fortune, but of every attendant circumstance which can most flatter the vanity, or contribute to the happiness of woman. The report, however, of Lucy's marriage, (which her adoption by Lady Roxmere seemed to confirm,) as well as the nearer acquaintance of her pretty rival, had done more to arouse her passions, and to excite her jealousy and ambition, than all her mother's previous lectures; and although she could not even fancy herself attached to Arthur, yet she resolved not only to display every art and fascination to captivate him on

his return, but in the mean time to do all in her power to supplant Lucy in his remembrance.

Lady Bertha was well aware of the effect which the exertions and flattery of women of fashion and beauty are wont to have on the minds of young men, and of the numbers who are thus ensnared and entangled on their first entrance into the world, and she therefore lost no time in attacking Arthur with these dangerous weapons. By way of excuse for a first letter, she wrote to him inclosing introductions to the noble owners of Saltram and Mount Edgecumbe, and other places in the vicinity of Plymouth, affecting not to be aware that the Roxmeres were well acquainted with Lord Moxley and the proprietor of the latter splendid residence; to those were added a hundred regrets at his absence, a thousand hopes for his speedy return, besides a volume of that little engaging chit-chat which renders the correspondence of the fair sex so attractive even to the gravest and wisest men. Subjoined was a postscript, with many remembrances from Camilla, enclosing a purse and a waltz, the one

netted for Arthur, the other copied by her for the band, together with sundry compliments on his skill as a draftsman, and a request for one or two sketches of scenery for her album.

An older man and one more experienced, would have quickly discovered the drift of this letter; but to receive such an epistle, and, above all, such a pretty flattering postscript from a young lady whom the whole mess unanimously declared to be not only "a d——d fine creature!" but, out and out, the prettiest girl they had seen at Brighton, was enough to have turned any young cavalier's heart, who had seen nothing of the world, and, above all, who had just "joined" for the first time. Arthur, enchanted with his correspondents, returned an immediate answer; and thus Lady Bertha established an interchange of letters, which was carefully kept up during the whole period of Mr. Beverley's absence.

CHAPTER XI.

On the appointed day the Roxmeres and Lucy made their appearance at the Grange, where they found a large party assembled; and as more than one of the individuals composing it bear a conspicuous share in the subsequent pages, I must pause to introduce them.

Lord Colnbrook, the young Peer upon whom Mr. Grantham speculated for Camilla, had lately entered into full possession of his privileges and fortune. He was not only one of the handsomest men in London, but yielded to few in grace and accomplishment. Educated by his mother, a woman of talent and morality; being naturally sensible and well-disposed, there was every hope of his becoming an amiable member of society; but unfortunately his pru-

dence and strength of mind were not on a par with his talents, nor were his self-love and vanity proof against the flattery and seductions of the world. Even before he left College, he had fallen into the hands of that set of women, who, though at the apex of all that is fashionable and select in the gay world, are infinitely more dangerous to the morals and principles of young men, than even those unhappy and abandoned creatures who are completely without the pale of society: for a man must indeed be strangely perverted, if, on a short acquaintance with the latter, something does not occur either to shock his delicacy, or to make him ashamed of them and himself: but when a youth, on his first entrance into the world, perceives that women whose reputation is no longer equivocal, and whose conduct, as wives and mothers, is a disgrace to morality, are not only the arbitresses of *ton*, but the objects of envy, and the actual models for imitation by many of their own sex, it would be strange if his notions of virtue did not soon relax: still more singular, if, on becoming the object of the unblushing advances of these women, he did not laugh at

all scruples, and consider principle in man, and virtue in woman as both very vulgar and useless qualities. Such had been the case with Lord Colnbrook, whose flirtations had already made some noise in the world, though he had hitherto borne rather a passive than active share in these matters, as is generally the case with young beginners; nor was his heart entirely corrupted, but as one of his gay associates observed—"I think, if Colnbrook continues to go on as well another season, the odds are, that a duel or Doctors' Commons will establish his reputation, and ruin that of Lady Dorimont for ever."

Mr. Maltby fully justified, both by his moral and personal qualifications, the aversion expressed for him by Fanny Grantham. His high round shoulders, small inexpressive eyes, coarse features, red hair, and heavy, ungainly figure, gave one little cause to imagine that he laid claim to one of the noblest titles of the realm. From a wanton, spoiled child, he had become a mischievous cruel boy, and had thence grown into a vicious and depraved man. Fond of low company and low vices, there was no-

thing in his manner or conduct which acted as a set-off against his ignoble libertinism and vulgarity. He was proud without dignity, prodigal without generosity, and fearless without moral courage. He loved women without appreciating their merits, even as he liked wine, not for its generous flavour, but for its intoxicating qualities; or as he loved horses, not from any feeling of respect, or humanity to those noble animals, but merely because they were subservient to his pleasures. He would as readily cast off the poor creature whose innocence he had blasted for ever, and abandon her to pollution, misery, and destruction, as he would send to the hammer or kennel some favourite hunter with which he had become tired either from caprice or accident. With many vices he had no redeeming virtues, but that of being what is called a d— good fellow, which, if I mistake not, means an amalgamation of gambler, fox-hunter, and debauchee. However, he was not without natural talent, shrewdness, and, above all, hypocrisy: he could so well dissimulate when the occasion required it; he could advocate morality and declaim against

vice so admirably, that many who heard him talk could scarcely believe that his real feelings and actions were in direct contradiction to his words. Such was the immediate heir to the Roxmere Peerage in the event of Arthur's death,—such was the person whom Lady Bertha called an eligible match for poor Fanny.

I must turn from the disagreeable picture of the young man to that of Colonel Parkville, a gentlemanly, good-tempered old beau, scrupulously neat in his dress, and punctual in his habits. This worthy had many singularities in his character, but none more striking than his love of good living, and his invincible dislike to the country. Since he quitted the Guards, he said that he had been twice only as far as Windsor by land, and once only as far as Greenwich by water, when he caught a horrid cold in exchange for a quantity of little unsatisfactory fish, and was nearly run down by a steamer into the bargain; indeed, he added, that he might still have remained in the army, had not they of the Horse Guards adopted the unpleasant custom of sending the household battalions on foreign service, even during the

very heart of peace, that is to say, to Chatham, Plymouth, or Dublin. He declared that he could walk up and down St. James's Street without being fatigued; but that his legs refused their office at the sight of a meadow or stubble: he could drive too for hours in the Park, without inconvenience to himself or buggy horses; but the moment the animal found itself without the bills of mortality, it would gib and refuse the collar, unless the roads were watered in the summer, and scraped clean in winter. By some fatality, the Colonel, who had not only escaped the perils of war, but the still more dangerous assaults of the fair sex, until he had nearly attained his sixtieth year, suddenly found himself seriously enamoured of an opera-dancer, who first ran away with a great deal of the Colonel's money, and then with his nephew, a young Life-guardsman; consequently he resolved to bury his chagrin and his losses for a short time in the country, and accepted Lady Bertha's invitation. This operation was not, however, so easily performed as may be supposed, twenty years having elapsed since he had retired to rest without

being lulled to sleep by a St. George's watchman.

After nearly fidgeting himself into a fever, he at length proceeded to his solicitor's, and revised his will; and thence to the Clubs, where he bade adieu to his friends, with as much depression of spirits as though he had been appointed Governor of Sierra Leone. Having lingered in the Park until dark, and driven up and down the fashionable streets at a slow pace, as it were to take leave of his favourite haunts, he returned home and gave the following directions to his valet: "Fill my old campaigning tea-chest with some of my mixture from Twining's; there 's nothing but chopped hay in the country. Put up a few pats of Cullum's butter; I do not believe that the cows give fresh milk beyond Epping. Take care that I have a sufficient stock of shirts to last during my absence; the country washerwomen have no more idea of starch than Lord ——. Let me have a few French rolls; they bake nothing but brown bread on the other side of Hounslow. Set my watch to a moment by the Horse Guards, that I may at least know what I should be doing if

I were at home; and mind that my Morning Post is properly directed,—half my acquaintance may die or dine out, and I be none the wiser; those confounded country journals are filled with nothing but advertisements of quack medicines and lost sheep."

Having seen all the frames of his pictures and mirrors papered up, the covers put on his furniture, and his mattresses properly exposed to air, he placed himself in his carriage as the clock struck the appointed hour, and proceeded on his journey; not, however, without an inward shudder at the sight of the rumble behind and the boot, instead of the dapper hammer-cloth in front of the vehicle. The adventures of the first evening had, however, nearly determined him to return to town, whilst it more strongly confirmed his hatred to the country. Arriving after dark at the town, where he purposed passing the night, he found the whole country assembled for some public meeting; and consequently the inns were not only overflowing with visitors, but it was with difficulty he could obtain admittance. As it was, every private apartment being occupied,

he was obliged to content himself with a corner of the public-room allotted to general travellers, where his patience was put to the rack, and every one of his senses disgusted in their turn. At one moment his ears were offended by the banging and cracking of doors, the perpetual ringing of unanswered bells, the endless calls for brandy and water, slippers, and housemaids, interspersed with grumblings of impertinent stage-coachmen, and the execrations of passengers, who, urged on by the guard, were hastily bolting lumps of under-done beef, or gnawing legs of tough fowls. At another moment his olfactory nerves were poisoned by the smell of wet coats, gin, bad segars, and bagsmen's unbooted feet; whilst his eyes were shocked with the sight of dirty stockings, unshaved faces, and unwashed hands of the various personages with whom he was thrown. To add to his vexation, a nasty poodle which had prowled about the room, grinning, growling, and snarling at every fresh animal, at length picked up a quarrel with a bags-man's terrier: being, however, speedily defeated, it took refuge under the Colonel's table; and upon receiv-

ing a hint that its company was *de trop*, it forthwith revenged itself on Parkville's leg, who, of course, kicked it to the other end of the room. This aggression on the cur was immediately taken up by its master, an Irish recruiting-officer, who removing the legs and body, with which he had hitherto politely skreened the fire from every one else, and quitting his glass of port-wine negus, in no very mild manner, demanded instant satisfaction; nor was it without some difficulty that the traveller honourably avoided a duel with the fire-eating subaltern of the line; who, independent of his natural propensity to the smell of powder, felt his appetite for combat whetted by the idea of winging a guardsman.

Vainly did the worthy Colonel ring, swear, or entreat; landlord, cooks, and waiters, occupied with the great people of the county, left all casual guests to the care of Boots, who, to the oft-repeated calls and melancholy questions of "Am I to have anything to eat?" merely popped in his head, and, as if in mockery to the Colonel's sufferings, replied, "Yes, Sir, coming directly," and then disappeared for

an hour. Having at length contrived to procure a massive mutton chop, some half-boiled potatoes, and a doughy apple-tart, he retired to his bed-room, and, despite of his dread of damp sheets, endeavoured, with the aid of warming-pans and flannel dressing-gowns, to drown his care in sleep. Scarcely, however, had he fallen into a doze, ere, to his horror, he was roused by the striking up of a band of fiddlers, who were only separated from his pillow by a thin partition-wall; and, in a few seconds, his bed, windows, doors, basins, jugs, and even the few teeth in his head, were rattling, gingling, and jumping in, or rather out of time to "the Recovery," to which tune the heavy feet of the whole county were clumping away in the adjacent ball-room. This new and unexpected torment continued without intermission until the morning, and he passed a wretched sleepless night, swearing, kicking, and groaning, as one tedious country-dance was succeeded by another still more monstrous and interminable than its predecessor; until daylight and "Sir Roger de Coverley" at length put an end to the leaden efforts of the

dancers, and, as he hoped, to his anguish ; but, alas ! his bed-room being situated over both the hen-roost and coach-house, new miseries were in store for him ; for, partly from the horrible smell of a huge he-goat who had taken up his station in the one, and partly from the incessant cackling, crowing, squeaking, and chuckling of the inmates of the other, all attempts at sleep were rendered abortive.

After such a succession of misfortunes, it may well be imagined that he was in no very good humour on his arrival at the Grange, nor was his temper at all improved by the sight of a lady, whom for the last fifteen years he had studiously endeavoured to avoid ; a report having been put into the paper, as he imagined by the lady herself, of his being about to, what is called, " lead her to the altar."

This damsel, a Miss Scarsdale, though still retaining considerable remains of personal beauty, and much more loveliness and gaiety than is at all usual with English women in general, had already attained that ticklish period, when the antecedent " Miss " sits like the night-mare on the heart of woman ; at the same

time, she was far from having renounced her pretensions, or relaxed her efforts to obtain that more matronly title, for which she had sighed, ogled, flirted, and netted purses in vain for upwards of twenty years. Of course, she had been too difficult, (what elderly spinster has not?) and had rejected several excellent offers, and might have married two K.C.B.'s, and at least half a dozen Misters of different grades—then there were whispers of a bloodless duel between two officers of the City Light-horse; hints of a Cheshire squire who drank himself into an apoplexy; a story of a lieutenant in the navy who volunteered, single-handed, to cut the whole French flotilla out of Boulogne, and all out of sheer despair at her cruelty. She was one of those migratory ladies who, without any settled domicile, pass their lives in running from one friend's house to another, positively belonging to no one, but ostensibly laying claim to every body, that is to say, declaring themselves to be a kin to one-half the families in the United Kingdom, and much better acquainted with the genealogies of the rest, than even the very individuals themselves. Say but the words

"Whom did Lady A. B. marry?" or "who is Mr. C.?" and she would give you the date, person, age, and fortune, down to the fiftieth cousin, in reply to the first; birth, prospects, and parentage up to the Norman Conquest, in reply to the second. She had at her fingers' ends not only all the intermarriages of the multifarious Cheshire Leghs, Shropshire Corbets, and Warwickshire Lucys, but she could run you through the various branches and off-sets of the Grevilles, Beauchamps, Throckmortons, Willoughbys, Cavendishes, Fanes, Nevilles, Spencers, and Berkeleys, of each county in England, nor stop until brought to a stand still by the St. Aubins and Pendarvises of the Land's End, or the Claverings and Harbottles of the border.

She was the terror of every peer, member, or clerk-in-office; the provident "May I ask for a frank for the day after to-morrow?" or the "Will you permit a few foreign letters to be addressed under cover to you in Downing-street?" being always on her lips. As usual with such persons, she had an immense correspondence, and would descend to breakfast with

her reticule crammed with letters, from which, to the delight of all the country misses, and the horror of every rational being, she would read aloud all the watery gossip of Bath, the bilious tittle-tattle of Cheltenham, and the dragoon scandal of Brighton; together with all the envious back bitings, vile calumnies, and ludicrous pretensions of the would-be great people of Tours, Brussels, Rome, or other continental towns, where the principal occupation of the resident English appears to consist in traducing and scandalizing each other, and where they give themselves those preposterous airs, that affectation of good-breeding, birth and fashion, which is the more absurd in people who, in nine cases out of ten, on their return to England, must again sink into that absolute nothingness and obscurity in which they had previously lived, and for which alone they are qualified.

When amongst remote people whom she thought she could astonish with impunity, Miss Scarsdale now and then hazarded an excursion into the mysteries of high life, and dealt boldly with the awe-inspiring names of Jersey, Gwy-

dyr, Sefton, and Hope; and who had a better right to do so? for she had been staying for a fortnight with some friends in Sloane-street, and would have been presented if the King had not postponed the Drawing-room; besides, she had some relations in Grosvenor-place, some delightful correspondents in Montague-square, and a cousin in the Guards; all of whom, espepecially the soldier, were considered as infallible authorities by her simple auditors. In addition to these admirable sources of information, and powers of amusement, she was often a real acquisition to her country friends; for she had a large collection of purses, embroidery, and carpet-work, which, if not absolutely the produce of her own hands, as she affirmed, at all events did great credit to her taste for selection; moreover, from her intimacy with the "dear attachés" to the embassy at Paris, she was enabled, during the peace, to obtain constant supplies of new fashions, as those gentlemen, so essentially useful at all events to their female friends, did not scruple, in order to accommodate her and others, to convert the despatch-bags into regular sacs de nuit; in short,

they would do any thing to oblige her, except that for which she was becoming every day more anxious; and as she had no wish to marry a foreign count or marquis, (who may always be had as a *pis aller*, providing a woman has a few hundred pounds,) she resolved to renew her attacks on old Parkville, especially as being aware of his aversion to the country, she attributed this extraordinary journey to the force of her own charms, though she was rather puzzled by the arrival of the young Baronet, whom she looked upon as a much better prize.

This gentleman, a Sir John Cumber, from having been abroad for a few months, had returned home with a most exaggerated and indiscriminating passion for every thing foreign, and a proportionate contempt of every thing English; though, in spite of apeing, and consequently outraging French dress and manners, Britain was stamped on his face and exterior, and a thorough English accent on his tongue. Not satisfied with boring one to death with the account of his *bonnes fortunes* in Italy, and his adventures at Paris, all of which he interlarded with a murderous jargon of French and Italian,

he called his town-house his *hôtel*, his place in the country his *château*, and his servants his *Gens;* he dressed up his gamekeepers as Tyrolean huntsmen, his dairy-maids as milk-girls from Unterwalden, and forbad his coachman to shave, in order that in due time his beard might qualify him to drive à droschka in the proper costume of a Russian. In short, he abused port wine, called his countrymen bulls, their wives *vaches*, their daughters *vitelles*, and Napoleon "*l'Empereur;*" he complained of English fogs, and tough beef-steaks, ate sour krout and drank *eau sucrée*, and fancied he dined quite *à la Française*, because his fish was served in the second and his plum-pudding in the first course, putting the question of his *savoir-vivre* quite at rest, by eating twelve oysters as a preliminary to his soup. In fact, the Baronet on his return appeared not to have forgotten one of the follies of his native land, though he had taken care to bring home a large stock of all those which he could conveniently scrape together on the Continent.

In a house where a woman of good taste and consummate knowledge of the world was abso-

lute mistress, it is natural to suppose that the dinner, with every other part of the entertainments at the Grange, was well done, without unnecessary display or vain profusion. Colonel Parkville, however, who was not only a great *gourmand*, but extremely fastidious in all matters regarding the table, declared the cook to be one of those negative performers whose works, though they do not absolutely incline one to dismiss them after the first taste, are still farther from exciting one to request a second supply; a solecism truly in good breeding, but nevertheless a most honourable tribute to the excellence of an artist, and the most triumphant proof of his genius and merit. He said that Grantham's dinners were of that kind, which one eats more as a matter of submission to the ignoble demands of the body, than from the more refined inspirations of the mind, and from which one arises, with hunger appeased, but without a single souvenir of sauce or seasoning, or the slightest reminiscence of *coulis* or *espagnole*.

The conversation happening to turn, during dinner, upon the beauty of the rides round the

neighbourhood—"I regret," said Lady Bertha, addressing the Colonel, "that we were unable to ride this morning; but to-morrow, if you will get up early, I will order the horses, and take you through the woods."

"You are excessively kind," rejoined the latter; "but, in the first place, I think it much more wholesome to ride after luncheon than before breakfast; and although I allow that woods are remarkably picturesque, and very useful when one wants money, yet I see no manner of fun in being stung to death with forest flies, scratched to pieces with briars, or obliged to ride with one's nose on the pummel of the saddle, to prevent its being twitched off by the boughs."

"We will give you a gallop across the Downs with the harriers," observed the host; "that will be more amusing."

"Indeed I beg your pardon," replied the guest; "I never could understand the pleasure of riding after a parcel of noisy little curs, or being ridden over by a legion of roystering farmers, merely for the sake of tormenting a wretched animal, which would eat much better

if it were shot, and hung up the proper time to get tender."

"I suppose that is the reason so many people hang themselves for love," said the host, whose puns were the terror of his friends, and the horror of his wife.

"Mortify, as we say at Paris, Colonel," observed Sir John Cumber; "nothing like electricity for that. My friend Madame Talleyrand assured me, that all the meat and poultry at her table was killed by that process; and her husband gave me the receipt—nothing can be more simple."

"Except yourself for believing it," observed Lord Colnbrook.

"Pray tell us how your friend Talleyrand procures his lightning?" said Lady Bertha. "Does he fast during fine weather, or eat tough meat *en attendant* a thunder-storm?"

"Neither," rejoined the Baronet. "The celebrated Franklin told him, whenever he wished to slaughter his animal, merely to fasten an electrical kite to the horns of an ox, or the tail of a fowl, and in a few seconds the clouds

would lower, the thunder rattle, crack come the lightning, down drop the creature; and in an hour's time the oldest bull in the herd would cut up like a calf, or the toughest cock on the dunghill eat as tender as a chicken!"

"I wonder," said Lord Colnbrook to Miss Scarsdale, in a whisper, "that Parkville does not try the effect of electricity on the flinty heart of a certain *gentil donzella;* a few shocks, and perhaps it might also become tender; but, as the saying is, *l'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose.*"

"How can you be so absurd, my Lord," rejoined Miss Scarsdale, simpering. "He never did propose, indeed; *il m'a payé un peu d'attention,* but nothing more;" and she then hung down her head, and held her breath until she appeared to blush; whilst the young Peer could hardly refrain from laughing at her literal conversion into French of the English phrase.

"To judge by the tenderness of some women whom one meets in the world, or rather of the way in which they pounce on every man they see, one might fancy that they had either been galvanized, or that they wore a conductor instead

of a busk," was grunted out by Colonel Parkville, who never lost an opportunity of saying something cutting to Miss Scarsdale.

Here Mr. Maltby turned the subject, by observing, "You were quite right, Parkville, just now, for hare-hunting is but slow work: when you come to me, I will show you some real sport with Lord Anson's."

"I would as soon go round the world like his ancestor," returned the Colonel. "I see no difference between making one's self giddy in galloping round and round, like a horse in a mill, after a miserable creature, with what you call a scent; or bolting straight-forward after another, with a thing behind it termed a brush: indeed, of the two, I should prefer risking my bones for the thing which one might at least eat, instead of putting one's limbs in jeopardy for a stinking beast, only fit to be devoured by the dogs."

"Our *chasse* in France would have suited you exactly," observed the Baronet; "deer, *chevreuil*, *tout pour le pot*, as they say."

"Pottering work, indeed!" rejoined Lord Colnbrook, whose great delight it was to make

Sir John expose his French: "your stag trots along a few yards before you, stopping every now and then either to nibble the grass, or to admire the prospect; the dogs go sniffing first at the horses' heels, and then at each other's tails, or squat down to eat grass; whilst the piqueurs play all manner of pretty tunes on their horses, and the gentlemen, much more anxious to keep their horses on their haunches than close to those of the deer, take care to follow the carriage-road, and studiously avoiding every hedge, ditch, or fence; and that you call hunting?"

"I should think, from your description, that you never were at a *chateau*, where there was a real *meute*," rejoined the Baronet.

"If you mean one absolutely dumb, which I conclude you do from your pronunciation," replied the young Peer, "I confess that I never saw (except at the Abbé Sicard's) any man or woman in France who could not talk you deaf in an hour."

"And if he means a pack of hounds," added Mr. Maltby; "if you will turn out a Devonshire calf before the Paddington harriers, they

shall show you much better sport than the finest pack in France!"

"And as for staying at a French chateau, Heaven deliver me from that!" continued Parkville: "beds like boats, basins like pie-dishes, silk hangings, but no towels; a moat full of water, but no foot-pans; all the men unshaved, praising the virtues of *la belle France*, and the valour *des Français;* all the women *en papillottes*, abusing English fogs, and swearing that *les Anglois sont des monstres, qui vendent leurs femmes, la corde au cou*, and have no other dishes than half raw roast-beef and potatoes *cuits à l'eau*. Then not a book, save a novel by D'Arlincourt; nor a journal, save that *des Modes*, or the *Courrier des Spectacles;* in short, during the few days which I passed in a French chateau, I had nearly died of the blue devils."

"How came it that you, who detest the country," demanded Lady Roxmere, "were induced to quit Paris?"

"Why, the fact is, I was deluded by the fame of the host's cook; but the rascal, as if on purpose to vex me, took to his bed from sheer vexation, because, after dressing a turkey *à la*

braise, and a dish of *cardons au vin de Champagne*, on purpose for Cambaceres, the latter sent an excuse, and dined at *Robert's*."

"I cannot conceive how you contrived to amuse yourself," observed another of the party.

"Why, I managed to get through the first morning by counting the eyes in a peacock's tail, who stood on a neighbouring wall; and as the noisy beast gave a shiver to his feathers, which obliged me more than once to recommence my calculation, I thus killed an hour. I then watched the ducks and geese on the dunghill opposite the drawing-room windows, and lost five louis by backing that one of the former would stand on one leg longer than one of the geese kept his head under his wing. I then mortally offended my host by mistaking his pet flock of long-legged sheep, as they scrambled for the withered grass on the road-side, for a herd of swine; and ruined myself in the good graces of his wife, by recommending her to fill up the fish-pond, and lay out the formal poplar-edged paddock and weed-choked wilderness near the house, in the Eng-

lish fashion, when in fact she particularly piqued herself on her lake and park, and gave out that her grounds were the perfection of the *jardin anglais*."

"Why did you not follow the example of my friend, the Marshal of the Palace to Josephine, who, whenever he was obliged to attend his mistress to Malmaison, always breakfasted all the morning, dined all the rest of the day, and supped until bed-time, as a preservative against *ennui*."

"He may be said," observed Lady Roxmere, "to have reversed the proverb, and devoured time."

"That reminds me," said the Earl, "of an anecdote I heard of a Russian prince, and his intimate friend, who, after a long separation, met accidentally at Paris. Both were on their journey to and from different parts of Europe, and were obliged to quit the capital the very night of their meeting. To invite each other to dinner was the first idea of two men who were equally fond of good living, and still more remarkable for their appetites; but this matter was not so easily settled, as, although both were

eager to give, neither felt inclined to accept the invitation; at length the matter was arranged by the prince consenting to dine with his friend, on condition that the latter would sup with him immediately after. This being decided upon, they adjourned forthwith to the Rocher de Cancale, called for the carte, and, to avoid all the embarrassment of choice, commenced at the leading *purée au crouton*, and ate and drank regularly down through every *entrée*, *entremet*, *hors d'œuvre*, and article of dessert, or wine, until they reached the final coffee: upon their arriving at this point, it was already late, and no time was to be lost in commencing supper; so, without further hesitation, therefore, they recommenced where they terminated, and absolutely ate back again to the place whence they started, without omitting a single dish."

"Horrible gluttons!" exclaimed all the ladies; "I can very easily believe it possible, my Lord," observed the Colonel, "after all one hears of the voracity of the Kamtschadales and other Polar tribes; besides, it is quite extraordinary how *l'appetit vient en mangeant*, when the cook is of the first class."

"By the bye," observed Lady Bertha, "is it true that Mr. Thing-a-mee, who walked to the world's end, has brought home an Esquimaux wife; and that she is to be educated, and presented at the Drawing-room?"

"Yes," said Lord Colnbrook; "and in the mean time, she has obtained permission to be entered as a student at Oxford: though gowns have been the standing order since the first foundation, there is no instance upon record, of petticoats having been worn by a Member of the University."

"A sort of Pope Joan," said Miss Grantham.

"I suppose of course, she will go to Christ Church," said Miss Scarsdale; "as I hear from a correspondent, who is extremely intimate with a particular friend of her husband, that she is not only well-connected, but a person of rank in her own country."

"Yes," rejoined the young Peer gravely; "her father is Keeper of the Seals to the King of Baffin's Bay; and her mother governess to the heiress apparent, who, by a very singular coincidence, is called Princess of *Whales*."

"It was quite a love marriage, I hear,"

said Miss Scarsdale; "and from their mode of travelling," grinned out the Lord, "I should think, a runaway match."

"But who is he?" demanded Lady Bertha.

"A man of excellent family," replied Miss Scarsdale; "indeed, they are distantly connected with us,—I may say cousins: his aunt Jane married one of the Wolds of Sussex, and his sister Margaret one of the Lincolnshire Dikes, and then you know he is nephew to the Yorkshire Moors."

"And cousin to the Welsh Hills, most probably," said Lord Colnbrook, interrupting her; "who are certainly the largest landholders in the principality."

"You must mean Shropshire," replied Miss Scarsdale seriously: "there are Wynns, Prices, Morgans, Lloyds and Owens, to satiety if you please, in Wales; but I never heard of any good family of the name of Hill."

Nothing farther occurred during dinner, calculated to excite interest. It was evident from the manner of Lord Colnbrook and Mr. Maltby to Camilla and her sister during the evening, particularly the decided attention of the latter

gentleman to Fanny, that Mr. Grantham had some ground for his speculation; it was, however, equally evident that, whilst Fanny listened with formal politeness to Maltby, she was pleased and gratified with the conversation of Lord Colnbrook: indeed, although the young nobleman had been much struck by the éclat of Camilla's beauty, yet he appeared still more charmed with the innocence and grace of her sister; and from that evening might be dated the commencement of a mutual attachment, which promised the happiest results. With the exception of Parkville and Miss Scarsdale, the whole party retired satisfied with each other; but as it often occurs on similar occasions, the old gallant (who, for the first time in his life, had been too late for dinner) found the only vacant place next to Miss Scarsdale; and he consequently lost no opportunity of proving by his look and manner his extreme annoyance at his situation. In despite of the painful sensations which intruded themselves on Lucy's mind, and the misery she suffered in endea-

vouring to suppress her feelings whenever Arthur's name was mentioned, she was delighted with the party, and looked forward with real pleasure to the amusements of the following day.

CHAPTER XII.

THE long-looked for morning at length made its appearance, and at an early hour the various thoroughfares conducting to the race-course were crowded with numerous merry groups on foot and on horseback, together with a multitude of vehicles of almost every denomination and form.

The Races!—there is something in the very word which must carry with it a thousand joyful expectations and tender reminiscences to the minds of persons of every age and sex. On the one hand, the young look forward with glad anticipations of merriment and rejoicing to a period which, independent of all more tender hopes and chances, is usually devoted to the reunion of friends and relatives; and at that age there exists a heartfelt pleasure and con-

fidence in our intercourse with near relations; there is an endearing charm in the antediluvian appellation of uncle, aunt, or cousin, which the hateful jealousies and jarring collisions of worldly ambition and interest too soon enfeeble, too often convert into irreconcilable coldness, distrust, and antipathy. On the other hand, the pulse of the old must beat with greater elasticity; and if they look back on those days when, full of hope and emulation, young and vigorous as the noble steeds whose prowess they witnessed, they themselves first started for the goal, it must remind them of many dear companions and friends, long perhaps departed, but then eager as themselves to run the race of life—alas! how quickly sped: it must bring to their recollection circumstances which have perhaps influenced the destinies of their lives; for it was there, perchance, they saw for the first time the young beauty whose refusal condemned them to disappointment and celibacy, or whose faltering though not unwilling assent has blessed their subsequent days with domestic happiness and content.

At the appointed hour, the several carriages

of the Grange party were at the door, and in a few minutes the whole cavalcade was in motion towards the scene of action. Upon arriving at a spot where a lane diverged from the main road in the direction of the course, their progress was impeded by the crowd; and as they advanced still farther, the following brief colloquy reached them.

"This—this is the shortest way!"

"Where to?"

"To hell fire!"

"Then, as time is no object, we'll keep t'other road."

This singular dialogue took place between one of a group of mounted farmers, who amidst shouts of laughter galloped onwards, and a tall haggard-looking individual, who with long pendant hair, black bushy brows, and a suit of the same colour, stood perched on a mound of earth near the way-side, whence he apostrophized the passengers in a strain of eloquence not less vehement than it was mistimed; menacing with eternal misery and perdition all those who, in despite of his

threats, still persisted in continuing their progress towards the course.

In addition to a countenance in which craft, hypocrisy, and selfishness were the predominant characteristics, this man's eyes, in one of which there was a villanous leer, seemed constructed like those of a cameleon; for he contrived to keep one of them steadily fixed on the dark volume which he carried in his hand, whilst with the other, which rolled about as if it had been mounted on a swivel, he glared with a mixture of singular cunning and malevolence on the passers by. Upon a placard, placed on a pole above his head, was inscribed in large characters, the following consolatory distich: "*Turn! for the gates of hell are yawning to receive thee. Turn from the path of Sin! or lice shall come upon thy children, locusts shall devour thy crops, thy cattle shall be smitten with hailstones, and thou shalt become as the dung of the fields, or even as a broken vessel filled with sharp thorns.*" In addition to this blasphemous appeal to the feelings of the class whom it was meant to intimidate, three

or four assistants of the same class as the preacher were employed in distributing tracts and printed papers to the crowd, uttering in a monotonous nasal voice such sentences as these: "Beware! for the vengeance of the Lord is swifter than a thousand horses, and the thunder of his wrath is louder than the rattling of ten thousand chariots:"—"Hear counsel, and receive instruction, or thou shalt be cut off! yea, even as the dry stubble by the way-side!"—exclamations which formed a heart-sickening contrast to the "Here's the only true and correct account of the running horses, the names of their owners, and the colours of their riders!" and many other of those cries with which one is regaled on his approach to a race-course.

"Can any thing be more abominably blasphemous and unseasonable than the language and proceeding of that ranting fanatic?" said Lord Colnbrook, as they passed the spot whence the preacher was thundering forth his anathemas. "It is a disgrace to the laws, that such fellows should be permitted to insult their Maker's name by this indecent display of their

hedge-side oratory! If magistrates would occupy themselves in rooting out these hypocrites, instead of persecuting a poor wretch who perchance sells a loaf to a starving mechanic on a Sunday, both Church and State would be more thankful to them for their services."

"The bitterest enemies of religion could not invent a more successful method of enfeebling and fixing ridicule upon our faith, than by resorting to such men, methods and moments to uphold it," answered Lady Roxmere, who was in the same carriage with Colonel Parkville and the Earl.

"That man," said Lord Roxmere, "is a mere tool in the hands of some of those bigoted intolerants, who, though they are the first to petition for the abolition of oaths and restrictions, and to bluster about liberty of conscience and equality of rights, are in secret the most determined adversaries, not only of the Established Church from which they are dissenters, but of that vast body of our aggrieved fellow-subjects, whose position forms such an extraordinary paradox in our constitution; at once exciting the regret of every just and moderate

man, and the astonishment of the Christian world, and proving that our vaunted tolerance and liberty in all religious matters is at best but a mere delusion."

"As the Sultan very plausibly observed," answered Lord Colnbrook, "when our Ambassador at Constantinople presented some remonstrance in favour of the Greeks. 'What do the silly Giaours mean?' said Mahmoud; 'let them look at home!—Bishmilla! are the Irish better than Rayas?—Were I to say to the infidels, there shall be war between us, unless the dogs, your brethren, are freed, would they not say, he raves?—By the beard of the Prophet! the English are tyrants, and their boasted freedom is a lie.'"

"I think," said Lady Roxmere, "that all those persons who are sincerely of opinion that it is inconsistent with their moral duties, as Christians, to attend places of public amusement, are not only quite right in staying at home, but in exerting themselves in a moderate manner to induce others to imitate their example; but this is carrying their zeal too far,

and must defeat the object they are anxious to effect."

"Moderation," rejoined the Earl, "is not, generally speaking, their particular forte?"

"No," returned Lord Colnbrook; "for, however much they may be solicitous for the welfare of people's souls in the next world, they seem to think it quite fair to wage war on their bodies in this: an instance which came within my knowledge, will give you some idea of the measures resorted to by these worthies to obtain proselytes, or rather to revenge themselves in case of failure: you know my neighbour, Whitelash, do you not?"

"Is he not at the head of the elect of your county?" demanded Parkville.

"It is his wife rather who is the tail, or rudder, which steers him in the right way," retorted the Earl.

"I recollect him one of the most dissipated young men about London," replied the Colonel, "a member of the 'Fly-by-night' four-in-hand; and God knows how many gentlemanlike associations."

"And his wife," said Lady Roxmere, "was once the great watering-place belle, the glory of pump-rooms, the pride of the pantiles, the promoter of balls, breakfasts, and theatricals. I never could understand the cause of her sudden conversion, or rather aversion to every species of amusement."

"As usual, I suppose," said Colonel Parkville, "disappointed love, mortified vanity, twins, or the small-pox."

"You are quite right in one respect," rejoined Colnbrook; "for when she married Whitelash, she went up to town, expecting to carry all before her, as she had done at Bath, provincial balls and low-meetings; but she quickly discovered, to her extreme disgust, that a Colossus of fashion in the country quickly dwindles into a mere pigmy in London: all her efforts were vain—she found the Duke of Devonshire deaf to her solicitations; Lord Hertford, heartless; and the fair wife of the admirable author of Anastasius, a forlorn hope: although she had been the coryphée of all ceremony-masters' lists from Harrowgate to Penzance, the Almacks' patronesses cast her peti-

tion unopened into the condemned basket. whilst even those of the French plays hesitated to admit her to laugh out of time at a vaudeville, of which, like nineteen out of twenty of her neighbours, she neither understood the points nor witticisms, even if she comprehended the plot; in short, finding all her efforts fruitless, she persuaded her husband that London was the very *pendant* to Gomorrah, that all its inhabitants were moral lepers, and that their only chance of salvation was by retiring to Whitelash-hall, and paying off upon their tenantry and dependents in the country, the mortifications she had met with in town."

"A very pretty account you have given of your fair neighbour," observed Lady Roxmere; "but what is the instance you alluded to?"

"Having had a large farm vacant," rejoined Lord Colnbrook, "one of Whitelash's tenants offered himself as its occupant. 'How comes it,' said I to the man, 'that you, whose family, from generation to generation, have been born and bred on the estate, should think of changing landlords?' 'Why, the Squire, or rather the Squire's lady and I have had a bit of a fall-

out,' returned he. 'What! she thinks you hold your land too cheaply?' 'I doubt not, my Lord; for since the Squire married, and took to psalm-singing, the rents have been nearly doubled, and not a shilling abatement was made, even in the hardest times, except to those who went to 'meeting' at the hall; and it's just about this psalm-singing that we fell out.' 'Why, what in the world has the Squire's singing to do with your rents?' was my question," continued Colnbrook.—'None, as a body might think,' answered the farmer; 'but because I preferred attending Divine service at the parish church, as my father and the Squire's father did afore him, instead of going to the meeting; and because I liked drinking a cup of tea quietly with my family, in my own parlour of a Sunday evening, instead of going up to the hall to sing hymns, and wash them down with a gallon of ale, the Squire's lady told me that I was a profligate old sinner; that my wife was no better than a Moabitish quean; and that we were breeding up our children as food for the devil; and that if I persisted in my stubbornness, she would

find an opportunity of bringing me to my senses, and sure enough she kept her word; for when the bank broke, just before last audit-day, I lost all the savings of many years. Being sore pressed for cash to pay my rent, thinks I, I'll ask the Squire for a few weeks' law; surely, with all his preaching in the name of our Saviour about Christian charity, he will not be hard upon a poor man in misfortune: but I was wrong; for within ten days his agent put an execution into my house, my stock and effects were seized, and, had it not been for our Vicar, who lent me the money, I might have gone to gaol, and my family to the workhouse.' —But listen to the sequel," continued the Marquis. "I accepted the man's offer; and he is now my most valuable tenant; whilst the hypocritical villain whom Mrs. Whitelash selected as his successor, was hanged within six months subsequent."

"Hanged!" exclaimed the whole party.

"Yes," rejoined Colnbrook, "hanged for having kicked his pregnant wife to death, in a brutal fit of passion, because the poor creature had purchased some articles of necessary cloth-

ing for her children, with the money intrusted to her by the monster to pay a public-house score."

Their conversation was now interrupted by their arrival on the course, where, having ascended the stewards' stand, a scene of animation burst on their sight, which filled the mind of Lucy with surprise and delight. Indeed, there is something so peculiarly national in an English race-course,—so unlike any thing one can see in any other part of the world, that it is perhaps, of all other places, next to a county election, where a stranger has the best opportunity of observing not only the wealth and beauty, but the peculiarities of the British people. Let him turn which way he will, smiling faces and laughing eyes surround him, from high to low, in the vast heterogeneous mass; all is pleasure and unreserved hilarity; whilst the interest which every individual present appears to take in the performance of the races, is not more striking than the admiration and respect with which the jockeys and stable-men are regarded by the people: for I query if Buckle, balancing in the weighing-machine, with his

saddle strapped to his back, after winning the gold cup, would not attract infinitely more respect and attention than the Duke of Wellington, had the latter ridden down Ascot-heath immediately after one of his victories, dressed in his white cloak and mounted on Copenhagen. Then again, there is something singularly paradoxical in the good humour with which your independent yeoman, or sturdy mechanic, usually so jealous of his rights, submits to a cut from the course-keeper's whip, or a blow from a constable's pole, if he attempts to break the line; whereas, were a soldier to be employed to keep order, as is the case on all occasions of festivity, whether spiritual or temporal, on the Continent, the sight of a drawn sword would suffice to mar all pleasure, even if it did not produce a riot; and instead of hearing the stewards lauded by the journalists for the excellence of their arrangements, the columns of the newspapers would be filled with indignant declamations against military despotism, and the murdered liberties of the subject.

On every side something new and amusing meets the eye. There, in the first ranks of

those large open buildings erected on one side the course were seated hundreds of those lovely women, whose clear, transparent complexions, and deer-like moulded forms, but, above all, whose many virtues are at once the pride of our Island, and the admiration of every foreign nation—in fact, upon looking at them from a distance, it required no great effort of fancy, to convert the stand into a conservatory, on whose elevated benches a rare collection of the choicest flowers had been placed for some floral exhibition.

Farther on, a booth, dignified with the name of the Subscription Betting-room, was filled with gentlemen, who affected to look as mysterious and uncommunicative as Gulley, Crockford, or any of the great betting men, should one have the temerity to address a word to them in St. James's Street within a fortnight of the Derby or Leger. On either side of the cords which marked the space reserved for the racers, extended long files of splendid equipages, drawn by four or six beautiful horses, whose outriders, drivers, harness and liveries, were admirable specimens of that minute atten-

tion to cleanliness, that exquisite combination of neatness and taste,—in short, that perfect *ensemble* which is not understood, and consequently not to be met with, in any other country. Intermixed with these vehicles might be seen here the quaint farmer's buggy, with its triple load of buxom damsels; here, surrounded by gingerbread and hot pies, a post-chaise crammed full of merry school-urchins, guarded by a wan, unhappy-looking usher; whilst there stood the neatly appointed chariot of some small squire, lawyer, or retired citizen, whose wife and daughters, revelling in all the prismatic glory of sky-blue hats, green laced boots, and pink pelisses, (such as that which had nearly destroyed all the classical illusions of Mr. Tobin Janson at the foot of the Pyramids,) were pointing out to their beau, perched upon the dickey, all the great lions of the county; and, between alternate munchings of cold fowls and sippings of Madeira, indulging themselves in a few splenetic observations against the pride of that neighbour by whose equipage and finery they were completely eclipsed, or against the conceit of that farmer's daughter

whose dress and appearance probably was fully as tasteless and gaudy as their own. Amidst the jovial crowd, which were disgorged from taxed carts, gigs, waggons, and stage-coaches, the new top boots, the round cut coats, the athletic forms, healthy countenances, and independent gait of the men; the plain white gown and straw hat, and here and there the less tasteful coloured pelisse and shoe of the females, bespoke some of that class of sturdy yeomanry, who are as much the exclusive growth of the British soil as Magna Charta itself.

Between the heats or races, every speck of ground was occupied by dense masses of pedestrians of every gradation, from the great county squire with his bright leathers and hands in his pockets, to the honest peasant in his white frock, with ruddy astonished face, and Jenny clinging to his arm. There the rogue, with his flying gambling apparatus, his cups and balls, or prick the garter, was defrauding the gaping clods of their half-crowns; there a gipsy was ensuring hus-

bands to old maids, children to the childless, wealth to the poor, and longevity to the consumptive; and then, by pinching the poor walnut-stained stolen infant on her back until it roared for *hunger*, extracting the shilling, in charity to her as a mother, which had been refused to her eloquence as a Pythoness.

There, strutting down the centre of the course, in all the pomp of war, heralded by a shrill fifer, and followed by half-a-dozen ragged fools, their hats bedecked with ribands, came the recruiting-sergeant of some pestilence-smitten, skeleton battalion, adding to the usual treacherous inducements held out for enlistment the following words, printed on a silken flag: "Now is your time; only twenty vacancies in the King's Own; all officers and no privates!" Here, a diversion was created between the heats by the crowd performing summary justice on some unskilful wight, who, having been caught in the act of purloining some farmer's handkerchief, was carrying off to expiate his roguery and want of address in the nearest

horse-pond, amidst the yells, hootings, and rushings of the multitude, and the kicks and thumps of the more skilful London rogues.

There, amidst an overwhelming din of gongs, trumpets, shouts of laughter, and roars of wild beasts, the clowns and showmen were endeavouring to entice the gaping multitude into their exhibitions by every species of gross wit and uncouth antic; whilst the fat, squabby, pock-marked female dramatis personæ, arrayed in all the lack-lustre frippery of tarnished spangles, drooping dingy feathers, dirty, darned silk stockings, and shoes as red as their faces, were parading their super-abundant charms in the front of the booth; and a corps de ballet, the sight of whose awkward gambades might murder Coulon, were kicking away with that peculiar want of grace, agility, and *à plomb*, which it must be confessed are singularly indigenous to the British soil.

As is usual in almost all provincial meetings, the actual racing formed the least important portion of the day's amusement. The rivalry on such occasions not being so much between the horses, as between the wives

and daughters of the spectators: there were, however, several races, multiplied by heats; and it was therefore late ere the party returned to the town to dinner, and afterwards proceeded to the rooms.

To describe the ball would be superfluous. Lucy, however, was in an ecstasy of pleasure: not only was this her first appearance, but her partners were always the most distinguished persons in the room,—a circumstance which, although it naturally pleased Lady Roxmere, increased to the utmost degree the jealousy and unkind feelings of Lady Bertha. Not satisfied with the marked attentions of Mr. Maltby to Fanny, which appeared to leave little doubt of his intentions; or of the scarcely less decided attendance of Lord Colnbrook on Camilla, she felt dissatisfied that any other person, except her own daughters, should attract a moment's notice; but, whatever might have been passing in her mind, she carefully concealed it, and even seemed to vie with all present in kindness and affability. After a night passed in that effervescence of pleasure which girls feel when they dance for dancing' sake alone, and are not

allowed a moment's repose, Lucy retired from the room with a degree of regret which one can only feel at that happy age when all is novelty, hope, and confidence; when we judge the world not such as it is, replete with treachery, cares, and mortifications, but such as it appears to be in all its fallacy and illusion; and when we cling to the proffered assurances of friendship, and protestations of love, and smiles of kindness, with all the delight of youthful gratitude and generosity.

To those of the party who enjoyed practical jokes, a trick played on Colonel Parkville and Miss Scarsdale during the evening afforded no small amusement. The excessive dislike, amounting almost to terror, exhibited by the old gallant towards the fair spinster, as well as the overt attempts of the latter to mollify his stubborn heart, was evident to every one; and it was determined, if possible, to take advantage of this circumstance, as well as the presence of the actress at the races, with whom Parkville was in love, to play them a trick. Having first ascertained that neither the Colonel nor Miss Scarsdale was familiar with the other's

handwriting, the following letters were written and secretly placed on their toilets during their absence at the course. That purporting to be from Parkville to Miss Scarsdale ran thus:—"

"Partly from mistaken notions of personal independence, partly from expecting greater perfections in your sex than it is possible for human weakness to attain, but principally from an honest desire to sow my wild oats before I settled in life, I have hitherto adhered to an early formed resolution of not entrusting either my liberty or happiness out of my own custody. A more mature acquaintance, however, with your virtues, dearest Miss Scarsdale, has not only revealed to me those perfections for which I so long sought in vain, but has convinced me that it is in your power to realize those golden visions of happiness which I have hitherto considered as mere phantoms. If, then, you can forgive that feigned coldness of manner with which I have endeavoured to mask my real sentiments, (judge not of Mongibello's fires by the wreaths of snow which gird its summit,) and will accept the homage of an attachment which

is as respectful as it is ardent, my felicity will be unbounded. I have yet a favour to ask. Do not write, I implore you: for, whether your decision be such as my longing heart desires, or whether it be unfavourable, which Heaven avert! my joy on the one hand will be enhanced tenfold; on the other, my grief will be softened by hearing my fate from your own lips. Even as my love is ardent, so is my impatience extreme; let me adjure you, then, to permit me a few moments' conversation alone during the evening: let not your delicacy be alarmed; my life is less dear to me than your repose; but it is my wish to proceed to London the moment I receive your answer, either to bury my sorrows in the solitude of my own apartments, or to hasten those legal preliminaries, which, God grant! may be the only obstacles to the immediate felicity of your devoted P."

"I shall quit the ball-room before supper; the garden door is at the bottom of the passage. My fate, my life is in your hands. You will find me in the centre alley very precisely at a

quarter past one: my watch is five minutes faster than the Horse Guards."

The note, purporting to come from the actress, and addressed to Parkville, was couched in these terms:—"In thus giving up for my sake all the gaieties and pleasures of London; in thus vanquishing the habits and antipathies which the fairest and most exalted have vainly endeavoured to induce you to overcome, I see a proof of disinterested, delicate attachment, which I can no longer resist. Yes, too amiable Parkville, you have conquered. Well may I say with our immortal bard:

> 'Canst thou, O cruel! say I love thee not,
> When I, against myself, with thee partake?
> Do not I think on thee, when I forget
> Myself, all, tyrant, for thy sake?'

Good God! my hand trembles. O my poor heart! the abyss is open wide before me, but I have not strength to avoid it: reason vainly warns when love impels. The garden is at the bottom of the passage which leads from the ball-room; remember the centre alley at a

quarter-past twelve. Do not forget your military cloak; I would have my conquering hero come to the appointed place arrayed in all his terrors, like Jove to the impatient arms of Semele."

No sooner had Miss Scarsdale perused the epistle addressed to her, than, unable to contain her joy, she exclaimed to her maid, who (as usual with such persons) was her confidante; "Gusset, Oh Gusset! P—— has proposed, and you shall be housekeeper. Only think of my being Mrs. P——. Dear me! I feel enormously queer. Oh, don't put out that toque! it makes me look a hundred. I 'll go to the ball *en chevaux*, as Major Hobs, of the Greys, said. —By the by, Gusset, when he hears of it, poor man, he will exchange into a black regiment. I 'll wear the *ponçeau* barège, Gusset, and coral necklace; and just add a fold or two to my *tournure*. My P. is an immense admirer of fine figures;" and then taking up the letter, she read it over to her abigail, saying, "I suppose there will be no danger in my meeting him, Gusset?"

"None, Ma'am, I should think," replied the

maid; "besides, lau! he 's such an old gentleman."

Pretending not to hear the last observation, Miss Scarsdale, who had been extremely puzzled by the classical name for Mount Etna, said, "Mongibello, Mongibello! I wonder if that 's in Wales!—Pray, Gusset, you 're Welsh, did you ever hear of such a mountain?" Not having received a very satisfactory reply from the abigail, who said she thought it more likely to be some place amongst the Kettley iron-works, she finished her toilet; and, unable to conceal her secret, sought out Lady Bertha, confided it to her, and having received a thousand congratulations and assurances that there could be no harm in accepting the rendezvous, she entered the ball-room, and anxiously awaited the appointed hour.

When Parkville opened the note addressed to him, he looked at himself in the glass with an air of peculiar triumph, examined his legs, made an attempt at a sort of caper, refused the spectacles offered to him by his valet, saying, "By George! you will try to persuade me next

that I cannot read without glasses;" and then breaking into the air of a vaudeville, he quavered the following couplet:

"Dans tous les temps bien reçu d'une belle,
Et dans les camps redoutable guerrier;
Dans un boudoir et dans une querelle,
Toujours mon front fut ceint d'un laurier."

Then turning to his valet, he added, "Put me out a flannel waistcoat, and look at the barometer, and precisely as the clock strikes twelve, meet me at the foot of the stairs with my cloak, my foraging cap, and my galoshes; and, d— it! do not stand staring at me like a turnip lantern."

It was no small addition to the amusement of the initiated to watch the behaviour of their two victims during the evening. On the one hand, the Colonel moved about with an air of lightness and elasticity for which his tendons must have suffered cruelly the next day; not only avoiding Miss Scarsdale, but behaving to her with greater reserve than usual; whilst, without betraying any particular attention to her rival, it was evident by the air of triumphant content with which he gazed upon her, as

well as his frequent examination of his watch, that he had completely fallen into the snare. On the other hand, Miss, dressed more like a girl of fifteen, than a maiden lady of forty, placed herself in a languishing attitude near Lady Bertha, following Parkville round the room with the most incessant vigilance, sighing and blushing when he approached within a few yards, and consoling herself for his want of attention by the beautiful allusion to the snow-capped volcano. At length she had the satisfaction to hear him announce his determination of retiring, which she did herself under a pretence of indisposition, immediately after supper, and then hastened to the garden. There, ensconced behind a trellis of fruit-trees, up to his knees in a bed of wet Swedish turnips, stood the Colonel, alternately counting the successive chimes of the clock, now repeating to himself a string of soft things with which he intended to overwhelm his expected fair one, and now cursing her heartily for her want of punctuality; his few remaining teeth clattering against each other like the bunches of wooden candles suspended over a grocer's door; his body con-

gealed into an obtuse angle; and not only being obliged to stifle his cough, but fearing to afford that assistance to his nose for which it was constantly giving the most unpleasant hints, lest the noise should betray his situation.

No sooner did he perceive a female figure approaching, than crawling from his retreat, he advanced towards her, shivering, not as Miss Scarsdale imagined, with the warm emotions of love, but with the titillations of cold. Stifling his anger and his suffering, he commenced a long flow of the most tender protestations, to which Miss Scarsdale at first replied by sighs alone, until at last, when he exclaimed—"Oh say, oh say that you are mine!" she replied in a voice scarcely audible, "I am, I am for ever yours—oh bliss! to be the wife of Parkville."

"Wife!" exclaimed the Colonel, starting back, his prudence completely overcoming his passion; "wife! Ma'am, upon my soul I never uttered a word about marriage."

"What!" retorted Miss Scarsdale, recovering the use of her lungs and voice,—"what! you horrid wicked man! Good God! how have I been deceived! Oh, if my brother Hector

were but here!" Then seizing the shivering arm of Colonel Parkville, she added, "Unhand me, you false Tarquin! are these the promises contained in your letter?"

"Letter, letter!—why, who the d—l are you?" exclaimed Parkville, instantly perceiving that it must be a trick.

"The injured sister of Hector Scarsdale," retorted the lady, her choler increasing; "and if you escape his avenging sword, I will sue you for a breach."

"A breach, Ma'am!" answered the other; "by G— you shall not carry me by assault! Listen to reason,—this is a trick; we have both been caught; therefore, unless you wish to expose yourself and me, I would recommend you to retire as quickly as possible.—Egad! it is very lucky I thought of my flannel waistcoat and galoshes;" and so saying, he hurried off the infuriated spinster towards the house, when both retired to their apartments, not, however, without having had more than one witness to the preceding scene.

CHAPTER XIII.

More than three years had intervened between the period of Arthur Beverley's departure from England, and that of his anticipated return; and it was with no common feelings of anxiety that Lord and Lady Roxmere looked forward to his arrival, and with no ordinary curiosity that they awaited to see whether his sentiments were still unchanged, and, if changed, who would be the object of his choice.

He had quitted them a mere boy, unversed in the ways of the world, and, above all, ignorant of the machinations of the sex; and in this respect his residence in a foreign land had added little to his stock of experience. He was now, however, a man, and at that age when

the passions are in all the vigour of their susceptibility and action; he would soon be launched amidst those fascinating and perilous temptations, those worldly seductions and pleasures, which have been the ruin of so many, and which require no ordinary judgment, forbearance, and strength of mind, to enjoy with moderation, or to escape with untarnished reputation and uninjured estate.

It was the Earl's wish that his grandson should return on half-pay, and turn his thoughts for the Senate, in which his talents and education qualified him to distinguish himself. Independent of his being their only hope, there was another cause which influenced Lord Roxmere, and one which he felt in common with many other patriotic lovers of their native land, namely, that of all those great and illustrious men, whose enlightened genius and unrivalled eloquence had raised the renown of British senators to the highest pinnacle of fame, many were already no more, and those few who survived seemed likely to follow with frightful rapidity to the tomb, without leaving behind

them a single rising individual to supply their place, or to console their country for their loss.

Whilst the different liberal professions were daily producing men of first-rate abilities, and the most brilliant talents; whilst the decks of our navy were crowded with a host of officers not less conspicuous for their scientific acquirements, than for their undaunted valour; and whilst our army numbered within its ranks one of the most consummate soldiers which the present or any past age can boast of, it was most singular to reflect upon the utter dearth of rising talent in the Senate, and that there was not one forthcoming young man in either House of Parliament who seemed destined to uphold the mighty reputation which Great Britain had obtained at the close of the last century; there was scarcely one, in fact, who would have been listened to by the house in the great days of Fox, Pitt, and Burke; not one whose name would arrest the hand of the historian, or rescue the period of his existence from oblivion;—in short, not one who promised to compensate for the deficiency of his eloquence, by the soundness

of his financial theories, or the grandeur of his political views.

As the Roxmeres became better acquainted with Miss Delmore, their attachment for her had not only increased, but their anxiety augmented to see her united to their grandson; indeed, Lucy's success in the world fully repaid the good-natured Countess for the sacrifice of her time and health. Gentle and unassuming in her manner, graceful and attractive in her person, she was generally admired, and what is in no small degree essential in the eyes of all mammas, had received more proposals than usually fall to the lot of those very select young ladies who commence their career by spurning the idea either of marrying any one but the Duke of Devonshire, or of even speaking to any one who is not of "the set;" but who, after a few unprofitable seasons commenced in feverish expectation, and terminated in galling disappointment and the upbraidings of mammas, are contented to dance with the most unfashionable booby in London, and too happy to put an end to the taunts of younger sisters, by marrying the dullest commoner in the realm.

Amongst the most assiduous of Lucy's admirers was Sir John Cumber, who had not only proposed shortly after the meeting at ——, but had recently renewed his offer, and had, in fact, induced Lady Bertha to exert her influence with her young relative in his favour. Under any other circumstance, Lady Bertha would have considered it a species of *felo de se* to have supported the Baronet's prayer; nor would she have lent her aid to bestow a Baronet and ten thousand a-year on a girl whom she hated, had she not hoped thereby to dispose of her daughter's most dangerous rival.

Three seasons had gone by, and though Camilla was as much admired as her own vanity and her own mother's ambition could desire, yet no offer had been made for her hand, that is to say, nothing which answered the exaggerated pretensions of mother and daughter; and their cold, repulsive, and even insolent manner sufficiently protected them from the plague of less brilliant, though perhaps more solid proposals. Lady Bertha's box at the Opera, her carriage in the Park, her horse on the banks of the Serpentine, were, it is true, in their turn

filled, surrounded, and followed by crowds; no *fête déjeuner* or *écarté* party was perfect without Camilla; her partners at balls, and her attendants on all other occasions, consisted of the most fashionable men in London, for each of whom she had been talked of; but amongst these there was scarcely one individual to whom, in common prudence, Lady Bertha could even wish to unite her daughter. Her Ladyship felt flattered by their adulation, and encouraged their attentions, because they were of "the set;" but she knew them and the world too well, not to feel convinced that they are for the most part too selfish to love any thing but themselves, and too much occupied with the hazardous and heartless pursuits of fashionable life to think of marriage, unless, indeed, hey can meet with some wealthy heiress who is weak enough to barter her thousands, as well as the happiness of her future life, for the empty honour of being the wife of a man of fashion.

Through the intimacy which existed between Fanny Grantham (who, by the by, had repeatedly refused Mr. Maltby,) and Miss Delmore, Camilla had extracted sufficient information

from her sister, to convince her of Lucy's attachment to Arthur; whilst Lady Bertha, having not less artfully contrived to throw Lady Roxmere off her guard, had also convinced herself that it was the wish of the Earl and Countess to unite their grandson to Lucy immediately on his return. To undermine and destroy the mutual affection of the young people, and to lower Lucy in the esteem of Arthur, had been Lady Bertha's unceasing object for some time; and as the period of his return approached, her anxiety to defeat the wishes of the Roxmeres, and to secure Beverley for her daughter, became more intense. In her correspondence with him, she rarely mentioned Lucy's name; but when she did, it was in such terms as these:—"Your old friend, Lucy Delmore, went with us to the Opera last night. It is a sad pity that she grows so plain, poor girl! and dresses so ill—such antediluvian taste! though, of course, dear old Roxmere thinks it perfection." Another time she wrote, "I am sorry to say, that in despite of all our efforts to bring Lucy forward, she does not get on well, and is not admired. I fear an absolute failure: it

is really very annoying; for, notwithstanding her dowdiness, she is a very good worthy girl, and one cannot help feeling for her." Again, she would say, "Your old flirt goes on as usual, very *piano*. By the by, all the world in ——shire said you were to marry; though I ventured to contradict it as an absurd report, and one likely to do poor Lucy much harm. There is something so utterly unfashionable about her manner, so extremely *gauché* in her *allure*, that I declare we are all grieved beyond measure, for she is so good-humoured."

In short, by cloaking her hatred and her object under the mask of sympathy, and merely hinting that Lucy was an object of ridicule and pity, she hoped to arouse those feelings of contempt in the mind of Arthur, which, she knew, would at once destroy his attachment; for her Ladyship well knew, that a lover can reconcile himself to ugliness, and even familiarize himself with deformities, but that there is nothing which shakes the *amour propre* of a well-bred man so much as the object of his attention being accused of vulgarity, or being wanting in any of those qualities which, in these days,

(when there is no distinction between the dress of the princess and the shopkeeper,) are the only land-marks by which one can recognize women, not only of good education, but who have been accustomed to good society. In either sex, the effect is the same: attempt to supplant a rival, or to destroy his hold on the heart of a woman, by taxing him with falsehood, inconstancy, profligacy, nay, almost any vice, and she will cling to him with incredulous and unflinching tenacity; for her vanity leads her to imagine that she can both reform and fix him, and that with *her* all his errors and inconstancies must end; besides, she attributes half the evil she hears to the envy and jealousy of the world. Change your ground, however; hint that he is a bore, a saint, a worthy; turn him into ridicule, anoint him with equivocal praise, and within twenty-four hours he will receive his *congé*.

Lady Bertha's schemes succeeded much better than she had any right to expect, as Arthur (whose attachment for Lucy, though not entirely extinguished, had from absence and lapse of time considerably diminished,) began to think

that he had been blinded by boyish love, and, from never having seen any other person, had converted a raw country girl into a divinity; all the abominations of thick ankles, long heels, red elbows, goose-skin arms, freckles, and short chilblainy fingers, danced before him; and he almost trembled at the idea of the ludicrous figure he should cut in the world, if he were to marry such a person as he now began to fancy Lucy to be.

The commission entrusted to Lady Bertha by Sir J. Cumber, afforded her an admirable opportunity of returning to the subject, which she did in one of her first letters to Arthur, much in the following terms: "Apropos of marriages—the age of miracles is not past!—what think you of Lucy Delmore, having at length made a conquest, and of no less a person than Sir John Cumber; and, moreover, of my being employed as internuncio. I think she is very fortunate; for although he is a weak, dull young man, and not by any means the sort of person I should select for a son-in-law, yet his fortune is large; and I dare say he will make her an excellent husband, they seem to

be so much alike in disposition and temper. I do not know when it will take place, but I hope soon; for I declare that I am bored to death with their flirtations: she looks as if she were making pinafores instead of love; and he as sheepish as if he had stolen her watch instead of her heart." After some other remarks, she proceeded: "You will find Camilla altered, grown more grave and serious, which perhaps is her style of beauty; for, making every allowance for maternal partiality, she is not only most beautiful, but all that the most anxious parent can desire in a daughter; save, indeed, what you know we mammas consider the grand desideratum, her disinclination to marry. She has refused several most admirable offers; and whenever I remonstrate, always declares that she would sooner die than sell herself for money. God knows it is not my wish to force the inclinations of either of my children; therefore, I can only lament that a girl who has no other pretensions than her beauty and amiable qualities, should allow so many opportunities of comfortably settling in life escape her; and in this I highly approve

of the prudence of her cousin Lucy. Camilla's indifference to the admiration of the most agreeable men in town, so universally coveted by all other girls, and her distaste for gaiety, surprise every one. I fear, however, that they proceed from secret attachment; but who the object is, baffles all my skill to discover. I do not think it right to torment her on the subject; and in the next place, I feel convinced that she will never bestow her heart on any one to whom I should not be proud to give her hand.—You see, my dear Mr. Beverley, that I talk to you with the confidence of an old friend; but I flatter myself that the interest you take in all that concerns your country neighbours, will plead my excuse: it is the particular privilege of our sex to gossip, and it would be quite out of character were I, a woman, to keep a secret.—Apropos, I forgot to mention that General Bloomfield has written to me by the Prince's command, desiring that Camilla may sit for her picture to Lawrence, as H. R. H. wishes it to be placed amongst his collection of beauties of the day. I hate this kind of exhibition beyond all measure,

and am sure the Prince might have selected an hundred prettier persons; but his condescension and kindness to us have been so great, that I should be sorry to disoblige him." In a postscript were these few words: "A thousand remembrances from the girls, as well as from your old schoolfellow and friend, Lord Colnbrook, who, I have reason to expect, will ere long be united to our family—his partiality and attentions to Fanny, originating, *entre nous*, in pique at Camilla's indifference, are most decided. I am enchanted at the prospect of their union, for it is a marriage worthy of a Sommerton."

The immediate effect of this letter upon Arthur's mind was far different from what Lady Bertha anticipated; and, had he been nearer home, would at once have frustrated all her machinations. Inflamed with mixed sentiments of jealous disappointment and wounded pride, he at first forgot Lucy's supposed plainness, her want of fashion, and gaucherie; he thought of her only as the blooming and innocent companion of his boyish days, the loved object of his earliest affections.

The flame which had lain dormant in his heart, and had been so nearly extinguished, again ignited; and had it been possible to have flown to the spot and carried her off from his rival, he would have done so in defiance of the laughter of Lady Bertha, and the raillery of the universe. But during the interval before the homeward packet sailed, he had time to ponder upon the utter inutility of attempting to interrupt a marriage which was already determined upon. A thousand angry and contradictory projects succeeded each other; but calmer reflection on the one hand, and mortified vanity on the other, gradually assuaged the violence of his disappointment and anger; besides, his conscience told him that there was some injustice in accusing Lucy of fickleness, when he himself had been the first to neglect her. The result was, that he threw the letters he had written on the subject, both to Lucy and his grandmother, into the fire, and determined to renounce all thoughts of her for ever; and these resolutions gained greater strength, when he contrasted the supposed mercenary conduct of Miss Delmore with the imaginary

disinterestedness of Camilla; indeed, as his mind gradually cooled, and was freed from the remembrance of the one, the thoughts of the other arose before him in still brighter colours from the contrast. He read that part of Lady Bertha's letter relating to her daughter over and over; and if his own vanity had not hinted that he perhaps was the object of Camilla's secret love, another circumstance occurred, which left him no doubt on the subject.

It chanced that Miss Scarsdale, amidst her manifold dear friends, was on terms of constant correspondence with the wife of Arthur's commanding officer. Lady Bertha, having discovered this intimacy, promptly resolved to turn it to her advantage. With this view, she invited Miss Scarsdale to pass two or three days with her in town; and, having led the conversation to her daughters, contrived to let fall quite sufficient to convince Miss Scarsdale that Camilla was in love with Arthur, and had been so for many years, and that he was the sole cause of her rejecting the many offers which had been made for her hand; in fact, from one point to another, she at last pretended to make a con-

fidante of Miss Scarsdale, well knowing that, in spite of all injunctions, many days would not elapse ere every one of her guest's correspondents would become participators in her secret. Nor had Lady Bertha miscalculated; for the first Sicilian mail carried out an immense dispatch from Miss Scarsdale to the female commandant, of which I shall venture to transcribe one or two postscripts only.

"P. S. I kept open my letter to the last moment, to send you the latest list of fashionable marriages.—No. 1. Only waiting for settlements, that wild driving rake, Sir Hanbury Harness, to the rich and stupid Miss Ankers. I met him at the Lloyds' of Aberllanllwyd vale; his only conversation about horses and splinter bars. He is what Clarissa calls a boo—a very buggy-boo, I declare. My cousin Perceval says that they put him in mind of Mr. Rogers's joke about the empty double Bath coach, 'two bodies, but not one soul inside.' Hector, who is enormously severe, says 'she ought to be painted with twenty shillings in her hand, and set up as the Pound and Anker, in opposition to the celebrated city sign.'—2. Linen and *et*

cæteras purchased. Lord Henry Melton to that horrid Miss Sarum. Colonel Parkville told me she came out when he did; judge then of her age!—(by the by, there's not the slightest truth in the received report of Colonel P. and me: indeed, I would not accept him now; at least, I do not think I would; the disparity in our ages would be dreadful; and then, you know, I am so enormously fond of children!)—And Perceval says, when he went into the Guards, they called her Old Sarum; and if ever, my dear, you had been packed as close to her in a hot crowd as I have been, you would say that she fully deserved the epithet, which her namesake, the borough, so justly merits.—3. Very doubtful; Lord Handicap to Lady Mary Crawford. Perceval says that his Lordship has already made several false starts, and thrown over at least a dozen, and that he will not believe it is a match until they are off. I should like to see him play such a trick to me. I think, as my cousin Percy says, 'that my brother Hector would take a spoke out of his wheel.'—4. Day fixed. The Rev. Sir Theophilus Lewis—Saint Louis, as Percy calls him—to Miss Rennet, her

third marriage. Her first ran off with her; she eloped, and was divorced from her second: and, as Percy says, though I do not understand the joke, 'it 's odd if she does not make *away* with her third.'—5. *Entre nous*, off. Mr. Framley to Lady Susan Larkington; Clarissa (who is admirable authority, from her maid being sister to Mr. F.'s footman) assures me that is quite at an end, and from the following cause. Mr. F. is a widower, you know, and has family, *du premier lit.* 'Are you fond of children?' said he to Lady Soneday. 'Passionately,' was her reply, 'that is to say, if they do not squint, have not red hair, are not marked with the small-pox, blow their noses, and are kept constantly in the nursery.' 'Hem! supposing that mine were unlucky enough to have been visited with any of the misfortunes which you have placed *à l'index*,' rejoined F. 'Nasty little things,' retorted my lady, 'I should order them first to have their heads shaved, vaccinate them two or three times a month, whip them as many times every day, until they went to school, and then never allow them to come home for the holidays.'—6.

Fixed, all but the day, Sir John Cumber to Lady Roxmere's protégée, Miss Delmore; and you may quote me as authority; you know she is a distant connection; that is to say, her mother's aunt was a sort of cousin of my father's; and Sir John's valet, who read the letter his master wrote, to propose, told its contents to Gusset. It is an admirable match for her, and, indeed, more than she has any right to expect; for, although she is very well connected by her mother's side, her father is a man of no family, what Percy calls a *non sequitur* kind of person; then, between ourselves, I hear that she is a very simple kind of creature, so that a fool like Sir John will be thrown away upon her, as Clarissa said:—by the by, I must give you Perceval's joke on the occasion. After abusing all the English women, and calling them *vaches*, 'I suppose,' said Percy, 'Sir John will call his own wife *cow-cumber*.' Apropos, I saw some cotton-stockings for her at Churton, eighteen shillings a pair; you may guess by that, of the fineness of the rest of her *trousseau*.—7. Lord Colnbrook to Fanny Grantham; though I do not think he has

proposed yet, or Lady Bertha would have told me. Do you know, my dear, it is quite shocking that men should now-a-days go such enormous lengths without coming to the point. I actually saw Lord Colnbrook pick up Fanny's glove, and put it to his lips: if a man were to put my glove to his lips, I should expect; and if he did not, I am sure that Hector, or some of my brothers, would ask him what his intentions were. These are all the matches at present talked of; but you know it is but the commencement of the season, and people never get settled until just as they are going out of town. My milliner tells me, she thinks June an enormously proposing month; I shall try and remain until after the King's birth-day. By the by, General Thumbury, that horrible jigging man, has just been accepted by some widow at Buxton; Perceval calls him the 'widow's mite.' Lady Cornwell and her daughters have been to Harrowgate; she has tried every bathing-place in England; but, as Perceval says, their cases are not only desperate, but that every one else is sick at the sight of them: is he not

enormously severe? The Delcourts are coming to town this spring; it is the expiring effort of Mrs. D. to get off one of her daughters. Perceval says that she comes within the act for setting men-traps.

"P.S. No. 2.—I again open my letter to communicate a secret which you must promise not to divulge: only conceive, Camilla, the beautiful Camilla Grantham, is dying:—apropos, the Prince has written with his own hand, requesting her to sit for her picture in the costume of a Circassian Odaliska; what that means I cannot make out, as it is not in my pocket Johnson. Perceval says it is something fie-fie, but I should not think that likely; do, my dear, ask the Colonel, and let me know. Well, only fancy Camilla absolutely dying for Mr. Beverley of yours; an unfortunate attachment which has existed since her earliest infancy. Indeed Lady Bertha told me in strict confidence, that Camilla had refused the most enormously advantageous offers on his account, and, shocking to say, has declared that, if Mr. Beverley marries any one else, she will renounce the world and take the veil. For God's

sake! do not hint a word of this to any one; but if you can use your enormously powerful interest with the Colonel, to send home Mr. Beverley directly, it may be the means of saving dear Camilla's life. Hats are worn now, so as to conceal the face completely, and to show the back of the head; waists are getting longer, and petticoats shorter. Percy says that we shall very soon pin our flounces to our sashes, and go about like the Mexican ladies on the French furniture paper. I have not heard of a single *faux pas* this season; but as I said before, people are not yet comfortably settled. Nobody now dresses without what Percy calls 'a Captain Turner;' indeed the captain is a delightful and almost indispensable companion."

No sooner had the worthy regimental lady perused this epistle, than panting to know the meaning of Odaliska, and utterly unable to imagine in what regiment this delightful Captain Turner could be, unless it was in the artillery, she called for her pattens, and sent an orderly to announce her, and walked across the barrack-yard to communicate the above

budget of news, and to gain information from the wife of the Major, who having once received a letter from the Miss Berrys to enquire about the character of a servant, had been looked upon ever since in the regiment as a blue. This lady had no sooner got rid of her visitor than she promulgated all she heard to another amazon, who told it to her husband the battalion-surgeon, who administered it to one of his patients, who retailed it to every officer who came to discuss promotions, dogs-ear the army list, curse field-days, or draw caricatures of the C. O. with a burnt-stick on his barrack-room wall. Thus, after traversing the whole corps, the intelligence at last reached Arthur; and in the end, to prevent misapprehension, as the she-commander said, she put Miss Scarsdale's letter into his hand; and thus matters stood with both parties at the period of Arthur's expected return to England.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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